

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Iraq Ad Melkert Concludes Successful Visit to Iran

Tehran, Baghdad- 8 March 2011 - The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. Ad Melkert, visited the Islamic Republic of Iran from 4 to 7 March 2011, upon the invitation of the Iranian government. During his first visit to the country since taking up his post as head of the United Nations Assistance Mission (UNAMI) for Iraq, Mr. Melkert met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ali Akbar Salehi, the Speaker of Parliament, Mr. Ali Larijani, the Deputy Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Mr. Ali Bagheri and the Deputy Minister of Interior, Mr. Ali Abdullahi.

Accompanied by officials from the UN Department of Political Affairs and of the newly established UNAMI Liaison Office in Tehran, Mr. Melkert discussed the role and mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI). He added that the United Nations stands ready to assist on-going Iranian-Iraqi bilateral engagement through the provision of technical assistance on issues such as the environment (combating dust storms and management of marshlands), de-mining, drug control and water management.

Mr. Melkert highlighted the opportunities for Iranian-Iraqi partnership across a number of fields. He recognized the important role that both Iran and Iraq can play in fostering a stable regional environment in which both sides can pursue key objectives of economic development and social progress.

As Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Iraq, Mr. Melkert is keen to support efforts by the Iraqi government to build and sustain constructive relations with its neighbors.

Mr. Melkert said: “my discussions in Tehran have been open and constructive. They form a good basis for UNAMI’s mandated support to bilateral Iraq-Iran relations in the context of enhanced regional cooperation”.

Biographical note: *During his distinguished career in national politics and as an international civil servant, Mr. Ad Melkert held the posts of Minister of Employment and Social Affairs in the Government of the Netherlands and Associate Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).*