

Speech to the Annual Planning Retreat of the UN Country Team by His Excellency  
Dr. Ali Sindi

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen; good morning;

On this important occasion I would like to welcome you all to Kurdistan. I wish you a very pleasant stay and successful Retreat.

It is very significant that for the first time the UN is holding its Annual Planning Retreat in Erbil. It is significant for two reasons: first, it reflects the change in the UN perception of Kurdistan from a danger zone to a green zone; and secondly it signifies the shift from reconstruction works to development works.

This is by no means an easy transformation. It is a rather sensitive transformation as we are entering a more challenging stage. Development is very important to a Region like Kurdistan and we have made some visible achievements, but the workload ahead of us is by far great than what we have achieved. In other words it is important to highlight the achievements, what is more important though is to address the shortages and flows. The most important of all is sustainable development, something that makes the whole process of development ever more challenging.

In this regard the UN agencies have been of great help to us. Through our cooperation in the last few years, we have greatly benefited from their knowledge and expertise. The fruits of this strategic partnership proof its importance to us. Important project like Public Financial Management (UN and WB) is starting to contribute to the improvements of our financial system. That is why the MoP attempts to strengthen this partnership and develop more co-financed and co-managed projects.

You can already conclude that we require assistant to make our development processes sustainable. We also hope that your priorities will reflect the needs of Iraq in general and Kurdistan Region in particular.

I would like to add, that through almost daily interaction and discussion with the UN agencies, we have a common agreement on the priorities. We, however, need to reiterate that in designing and implementing projects the KRG characteristics should be taken into account.

Finally I wish you very successful and fruitful meetings and a very pleasant time in Erbil.

Thank you for listening

22/11/2010