

9th IRFFI Donor Committee meeting
Sunday 8 November, Baghdad

Introductory Statement by
Chairman of the IRFFI Donor Committee
Ambassador Mikael Hemniti Winther

- Excellences, partners, colleagues, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, World Bank, United Nations and fellow donors.
- It is my pleasure to welcome you all here today in Baghdad. A special welcome to those of you coming all the way from your respective headquarters to attend the 9th Donor Committee meeting here in Iraq.
- This is my first time to Chair the Donor Committee meeting, since I took over the Chairmanship from Ambassador Di Martino in February.
- Since then, I have worked to further the decisions from our last Donor Committee meeting as formulated in the Naples Statement. This includes the wish for independent audits and evaluations of IRFFI funded projects, increased donor engagement in monitoring and evaluation, support to the UN in maintaining current coordination mechanisms and the establishment of a post-IRFFI mechanism, and finally, support to increased government ownership of donor coordination and aid management.
- I have fulfilled my role as Chairman by representing donors in two Executive Committee meetings based on regular bilateral consultations with donors as well as close cooperation with the UN, WB and the Government of Iraq.

- In an attempt to advance and look beyond the phasing-out and close-down of IRFFI, I have used my capacity as IRFFI Chairman to engage, in the interrelated continuous discussions on donor coordination and development cooperation here in Iraq. The fora for these discussions are many as are the different frameworks proposed for the future donor coordination of Iraq. (A good example in point is this weekend, which apart from the IRFFI Donor Committee meeting also comprises yesterday's meeting for a New Partnership between Iraq and the international community as well as the National Development Plan conference in Erbil).
- The close-down of IRFFI and the inter-related discussions on donor coordination in Iraq can also be seen as the red thread of today's meeting agenda – which is quite comprehensive
- After the status updates of both trust funds in session I, the UN will present its lessons learned exercise. The exercise follows the recommendations put forward in the Scanteam report, which was presented at our last Donor Committee meeting in February. In this session we will also discuss the issue of undertaking an independent review of IRFFI projects. This issue dates back to the Naples statement and has been discussed extensively amongst individual donors and latest in the Executive Committee meeting last month. The proposal of having a results-based review is ultimately derived from donors' wish to obtain and understanding of the concrete results IRFFI funds have contributed to throughout the life time of the fund. I believe the aim of this session should be to consolidate an overall architecture of IRFFI reviews, evaluations and lessons learned exercises, including steps forward in terms of methodology and division of labor. These undertakings will not only benefit IRFFI partners but also serve as valuable input for other MDTFs as well as

future planning and development efforts of the government of Iraq.

- After lunch, the UN will present a proposal on a new MDTF in Iraq. The proposal was put forward in the Executive Committee meeting last month and I shall leave it to my colleagues in the UN to further elaborate and introduce this particular session.
- At the request of the MoPDC, session IV is reserved for a proposal and discussion on a future aid coordination mechanism as presented by Huda Malik. The subject matter concerns the discussions on overall donor coordination here in Iraq, which have significantly intensified with the impending close down of IRFFI. The proposed mechanism has already been presented and discussed in the IPF and latest in the IRFFI Executive Committee meeting last month. I will let Huda Malik further elaborate on this session.
- Finally, we have session V on related issues. This session comprises the organizational aspects of the phasing out of IRFFI as well as the future format of IRFFI meetings. Both issues were discussed in at the Executive Committee meeting in October, where it was agreed to continue progress reporting to donors with myself in the role as Chairman/donor representative. However, it is only natural that the closing down of the fund is reflected in the organizational structure of the mechanism, why I believe it is important that we today determine the need for, and frequency of, high-level donor meetings and donor involvement in the format we have known to date.
- I wish us all a fruitful and productive meeting.