

11 October 1998

**Oil-for-Food
Background
Information**

Statement by Benon Sevan
Executive Director of the Office of the Iraq Programme
*(following the decision to temporarily relocate 130 UN international
staff to Amman, Jordan
on 11 November with an additional 41 due to leave on 12 November)*

The temporary relocation of non-essential international staff from Baghdad to Amman should not be interpreted as a suspension of the implementation of the oil for food programme. Their departure should not affect either the export of oil or the arrival of supplies under the terms of the programme.

In the 15 Governorates in the centre and south of Iraq, the Government is responsible for the distribution of food, medicine and other essential supplies provided under the humanitarian programme. The United Nations role involves monitoring this distribution.

We will continue to carry out our responsibilities albeit at a significantly reduced level. It should be noted that the United Nations has 524 national staff in Baghdad.

The 231 UN international staff and 809 national staff in the three northern governorates of Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah will continue working. In these governorates, the United Nations implements the oil for food programme on behalf of the Government of Iraq.