

## **OIL-FOR-FOOD PROGRAMME**

### **Phasing down and termination of the Programme pursuant to Security Council resolution 1483 (2003)**

**Statement by**

**Benon V. Sevan**

**Executive Director of the Iraq Programme**

**at the 4851st meeting of the Security Council**

**Tuesday, 28 October 2003**

Mr. President,

In paragraph 16 (f) of resolution 1483 (2003), the Council requested the Secretary-General "to provide the Security Council, 30 days prior to the termination of the Programme, with a comprehensive strategy developed in close coordination with the Authority and the Iraqi interim administration that would lead to the delivery of all relevant documentation and, the transfer of all operational responsibility of the Programme to the Authority".

When I briefed the Security Council at its informal consultations on 29 September 2003, I noted that most of our exit strategies had been overtaken by events over which we had no control. We had planned to submit a written report pursuant to paragraph 16 (f) of resolution 1483 (2003), but prevailing uncertainties on the ground demanded flexibility and compelled us to constantly revise our options for the phasing down and termination of the Programme. I, therefore, suggested that we report progress, at least once a week, to the Council through its Committee established pursuant to resolution 661 (1990), in lieu of a written report.

I thank the Council for its understanding and agreement with our suggested course of action. We have provided the Committee with weekly updates and participated at its formal and informal meetings. We have also kept fully informed the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and the relevant Iraqi authorities, and have been working very closely with them to finalise the necessary arrangements for the termination of the Programme. We have also kept Member States and suppliers informed, through the OIP Web site, of the relevant decisions and arrangements with regard to, inter alia, the prioritisation of contracts and authentication of humanitarian supplies imported to Iraq under the Programme.

On behalf of all my colleagues involved in the implementation of the Programme, I should like to place on record our most sincere gratitude to all members of the Council and its Committee, as well as to the Chairman of the Committee, H.E. Amb. Gunter Pleuger of Germany, and members of his delegation, for their continued understanding, support and cooperation with the Office of the Iraq Programme.

The United Nations will terminate the Programme on 21 November 2003, as called for in resolution 1483 (2003), and will continue to facilitate a smooth hand over to the CPA, in close coordination with the relevant Iraqi authorities.

In this connection, I should like to inform the Council that in a letter dated 8 October 2003 addressed to Mr. Tesfaye Maru, Deputy UN Humanitarian Coordinator in the three northern governorates, Ambassador Steven Mann, CPA Senior Advisor, Oil-for-Food Transition Team, North, stated as follows:

“In accordance with UNSCR 1483, and as reaffirmed by the United States in the Security Council session of September 29, CPA will assume responsibility for the phase out and handover. There will be no further role of UN agencies in directing these programs after 21 November. This of course does not preclude any normal country operations that may take place in the future using non-OFF funding.”

In view of the common position taken by the United Nations and the CPA, I see no alternative, as I also stated in my briefing of 29 September 2003, to “the transfer of assets, ongoing operations and responsibility for the administration of and remaining activity under the Programme to the Authority-Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) - ‘as is’, together with the “relevant documentation”.

My statement today will set out the actions identified and taken to date in order to meet this goal. It will also list the considerable range of activities that remain to be undertaken by the United Nations, the CPA, and the relevant Iraqi authorities to complete the transfer of all remaining responsibilities under the Programme to the CPA in a professional and comprehensive manner, with full transparency.

I ask you to bear in mind, however, that the substance of my observations today has been compiled under the most difficult circumstances, with the unstinting support of my colleagues in the field operating in substantially reduced numbers, mostly at locations far removed from their normal working environment and, at times, without having access to all the necessary documentation.

Handing over a multi-billion dollar Programme of such complexity and magnitude during the six-month period as mandated by resolution 1483 (2003) would have been extremely difficult even under the best of circumstances. Doing so under current conditions of insecurity and reduced on-site staffing capacity will require a degree of realism, understanding and pragmatism, as well as flexibility from all parties involved.

Despite these constraints, however, the United Nations has remained fully committed to the humanitarian welfare of the Iraqi people, and its approach for the transfer of responsibilities for the Programme reflects an unswerving determination to safeguard the interests of the Iraqi people.

Most of our phase down activities have been undertaken in the three northern governorates of Dahuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah, where the United Nations was responsible for the implementation of the Programme, on behalf of the former Government of Iraq. In the north, the handover involves the transfer of projects, assets, inventories and relevant documentation, contracts signed by the United Nations and its agencies and programmes with international and national contractors, as well as an agreement with the CPA on liabilities and calculations concerning on-going costs of projects after their handover to the CPA. Some \$8.1 billion had

been allocated to the three northern governorates since the start of the implementation of the Programme in December 1996.

With regard to the 15 governorates in the centre and south of Iraq, prior to the war, the role of the United Nations was limited primarily to monitoring and observing the distribution and utilization of humanitarian supplies provided under the Programme.

Handover arrangements for the centre and south involve a tripartite review by the United Nations, the CPA and relevant Iraqi authorities, of all remaining contracts for humanitarian supplies and equipment submitted under the Programme. The review has covered approved and fully funded contracts, as well as those approved but not funded. Adjustments have also been made for alternative delivery and authentication sites to enable the delivery of supplies and equipment to Iraq.

It was envisaged from the outset that these activities would take place inside Iraq. However, our preparations and best-case scenarios were undermined by chronic insecurity and, in particular, the tragic terrorist attack of 19 August on the UN headquarters in Baghdad, which necessitated a revision of the transfer strategy. Since then, the number of UN international staff and consultants has been reduced from the total of 769 countrywide to a small core group of international staff in Baghdad and Erbil. An inter-agency mission is currently in Erbil for a very short period to assist in the handover process in the three northern governorates. Most of the international staff have been relocated and, to the extent possible, they have continued to work in Amman, Jordan, and in Larnaca, Cyprus, on Programme handover assignments. As I informed you on 29 September, we had estimated that we would require at the minimum 115 international staff for an orderly transfer of over \$3.5 billion worth of completed and ongoing projects, including \$1.5 billion worth of assets, in the three northern governorates.

Given the reduction in United Nations personnel and the late deployment of a handover team by the CPA, the intended joint physical review of all Programme assets by the United Nations, the CPA and the local authorities, has not been possible. Accordingly, completed and ongoing projects and activities will be transferred to the CPA through dossiers prepared for each project and activity.

### **Transfer of activities in the centre and south**

As of 27 October 2003, 3,154 approved and funded contracts worth some \$6.36 billion have been classified to have relative utility. Additional 322 contracts were initially determined to have relative utility but were later assessed as either fully delivered or the suppliers were otherwise not interested in completing deliveries at this point. These contracts will not be amended by the United Nations prior to 21 November 2003 but will rather be transferred to CPA for further processing, where applicable.

The number of approved and funded contracts which have not yet been included in the initial review is estimated to be 1,621, with a total value of \$1.5 billion, including 775 contracts with negligible balances of less than \$30 million in total.

As of 27 October 2003, 273 approved but unfunded contracts worth some \$700 million have been funded following determination of their relative utility and urgent need. There remain 3,319 of approved but unfunded contracts, with a total value of \$6.5 billion.

Out of the total of 3,154 contracts that have been prioritised, UN agencies and programmes have negotiated amendments to 1,653 contracts, representing 52.4 per cent of the total number. The

UN agencies and programmes have repeatedly assured OIP that the amendment of remaining prioritised contracts will be completed by the deadline, now extended to 3 November 2003, unless additional lists of priority contracts are submitted just before that date. OIP has made arrangements to exceptionally process amendments received late due to reasons beyond the control of suppliers, but not later than 10 November 2003.

An urgent review will be undertaken by the United Nations of the contracts which have not been reviewed so far, in order to determine whether they have relative utility and to prepare a final list of such contracts by 21 November 2003. However, action is unlikely to be taken by UN agencies and programmes concerning contracts whose relative utility is determined after 28 October, owing to lack of time to process them. Prioritised contracts which cannot be amended by the UN agencies and programmes before the termination of the Programme will be transferred to the CPA for appropriate action.

Furthermore, pursuant to paragraph 16 (b) of resolution 1483 (2003), action on "contracts determined to be of questionable utility and their respective letters of credit" will be postponed "until an internationally recognized, representative government of Iraq is in a position to make its own determination as to whether such contracts shall be fulfilled."

Based on the essential needs of the Iraqi people, as identified by the UN, in coordination with the CPA and the relevant Iraqi authorities, and following my recommendation, the 661 Committee approved, on an exceptional basis, 13 projects for the procurement of items, with a total value of \$459 million, not covered by approved and funded or unfunded contracts. As of 27 October 2003, 100 contracts worth \$69 million were submitted and approved under these projects in the health sector (\$18 million), agriculture (\$35.6 million) and education (\$15.3 million). In addition, \$189 million were allocated for the local procurement of wheat and barley.

As of 27 October 2003, under resolutions 1472 (2003) and 1476 (2003), UN agencies and programmes had arranged the delivery of goods worth over \$1 billion. Part of the goods are still at locations outside Iraq and if such goods cannot be delivered to Iraq by 21 November 2003, arrangements will be made for their transfer to the CPA outside Iraq.

Some of the goods are consigned to UN agencies and programmes under resolutions 1472 (2003) and 1476 (2003) but not yet received by them. If such goods cannot be received by 21 November 2003, arrangements will be made for their consignment to the relevant Iraqi authority. A list will be prepared of the goods falling under the above two categories and handed to the CPA before 21 November 2003.

A total of \$398 million worth of goods were established to be in transit to Iraq when the United Nations independent inspection agents were withdrawn from the country in mid-March 2003 due to security conditions. A total value of \$315 million such goods have been prioritised so far, and arrangements are made for the suppliers of the remaining goods to be compensated under paragraph 4 (g) of resolution 1472 (2003).

The letters of credit for all contracts renegotiated and amended by the UN agencies and programmes will be retained by the United Nations until the contracted goods have been delivered in full and payments to the suppliers have been effected. The collateral funds of the letters of credits related to the other approved and funded contracts, which were not prioritised or could not be amended by the UN agencies due to their late prioritisation, will be transferred to the CPA for direct payment to the suppliers once these contracts have been executed.

Currently, the UN independent inspection agent (Cotecna) is stationed in inspection sites outside Iraq and authenticates the arrival of goods consistent with arrangements agreed upon between the UN, the CPA and the relevant Iraqi authorities. However, due to the fact that Cotecna personnel are not permitted to operate at the port of Umm Qasr, issuance of authenticated confirmation for goods destined for Umm Qasr will need to be halted unless the CPA provides appropriate indemnifications. In addition, I should like to register considerable concern that although one month has passed since the mechanism was agreed upon, the CPA has not provided OIP with information regarding contact points within the port or an update concerning any arrangements made to confirm the arrival of goods. Since 10 October 2003, Cotecna has inspected 25 consignments, including 111,917 metric tons of food destined for Umm Qasr under the revised authentication procedures, with no confirmation of receipt. If this matter is not urgently addressed, the confidence of suppliers in the authentication process may erode which may adversely affect the delivery pipeline.

Furthermore, in July 2003, the CPA was provided with details of 21 contracts in connection with which suppliers claimed to have provided services prior to the war which could not be authenticated due to the withdrawal of Cotecna. Despite repeated reminders, the CPA has only been able to produce a negative response in connection with two of the concerned contracts. The number of outstanding contracts with services to be authenticated has recently increased to 25, with a combined value of \$4.9 million.

The Office of the Iraq Programme has adjusted its databases to include information concerning the delivery dates negotiated by the UN agencies and programmes in connection with contracts prioritised pursuant to resolution 1483 (2003) as well as delivery locations and up-to-date contact information for suppliers. The entire oil-for-food database will be transferred to the CPA on 21 November 2003. The CPA needs to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place, effective 22 November 2003, for the effective management of the billions of dollars worth of supplies and equipment to Iraq from the Programme's delivery pipeline and for authenticating arrival of these goods in order to facilitate payment to the suppliers - perhaps through retention of Cotecna's services by the CPA for a limited period after the termination of the Programme. I have been given assurances by the CPA that a final decision in this regard will soon be taken, thus ensuring the continuation of authentication arrangements beyond 21 November 2003.

### **Transfer of activities in the three northern governorates**

The main objectives that have guided the United Nations, its agencies and programmes in their handover preparations, are:

- The timely transfer of the Programme's activities, projects and assets to the CPA and the uninterrupted delivery of essential humanitarian supplies and services beyond the Programme's termination on 21 November 2003.
- The protection of the substantial investments made in the three northern governorates over the life of the Programme, worth some \$3.5 billion, including fixed and mobile assets worth about \$1.5 billion.
- The transfer of any residual obligations, commitments or liabilities of the United Nations, that could arise as a result of its implementation of the Programme;
- The need to assess the adequacy of local capacity to manage Programme assets and maintain ongoing projects beyond 21 November 2003;

- The need to ensure that the local authorities who, following the hand-over to the CPA, will assume administrative responsibilities for the projects, receive all the relevant documentation needed to manage the assets and implement those projects beyond 21 November 2003. This includes detailed dossiers covering all projects and assets, their location and financial status;
- Adequate provision for the payment of recurrent costs for up to 12 months. This includes salaries for national staff providing essential services and the cost of spare-parts for critical equipment, beyond the termination of the Programme on 21 November 2003. The CPA and the relevant Iraqi authorities have submitted budgets to cover recurrent expenditures. The UN agencies and programmes have procured supplies to ensure the continuity of essential services.

To achieve these broad objectives, each UN agency and programme has devised individual exit strategies. These are based on the levels of project implementation and the possible future humanitarian involvement of the organizations concerned under their respective regular programme activities. Common to each strategy are five distinct components:

- The transfer of fully completed projects and activities, including the transfer of ongoing warranties, deferred payment and performance bond obligations, any residual United Nations liabilities, commitments and other obligations;
- The transfer of ongoing projects expected to be finalized before 21 November 2003;
- The transfer of ongoing projects and activities, including obligations and liabilities against local and international contracts that will continue after 21 November 2003;
- The transfer of warehouse stocks, including goods in transit as at 21 November 2003; and;
- The transfer of relevant databases of the UN, its agencies and programmes.

### **Completed tasks**

To date, 151 projects and activities, worth \$1.85 billion, have been completed. As indicated during my briefing to the Council on 29 September 2003, these will be transferred to the CPA through dossiers. The completed projects and activities, by sector, are: agriculture (14 projects, worth \$390.6 million); protection of children (7 projects, worth \$7.3 million); mine action (15 projects, worth \$115.5 million); education (27 projects, worth \$156.6 million); electricity (18 projects, worth \$548.1 million); food handling (5 projects, worth \$14.1 million); health (17 projects, worth \$156.1 million); nutrition (27 projects, worth \$78.3 million); water and sanitation (13 projects, worth \$182.3 million); resettlement (7 projects, worth \$176 million); telecommunication (1 project, worth \$25.8 million).

A further 117 projects and activities, valued at \$597.51 million, are expected to be completed by 21 November 2003. The completed projects and activities, by sector, are: agriculture (21 projects, worth \$47.5 million); protection of children (4 projects, worth \$4 million); education (46 projects, worth \$121.4 million); health (22 projects, worth 139.9million); water and sanitation (11 projects, worth \$118.7 million); nutrition (7 projects, worth \$49.6 million); and resettlement (6 projects, worth \$116.3 million).

The United Nations will hand over 159 projects, valued at \$1.1 billion, that will not be completed by 21 November. These are in the following sectors: agriculture (83 projects, worth \$202.1 million; mine action (1 project, worth \$15.3 million); education (33 projects, worth \$76.3 million);

electricity (12 projects, worth \$98.3 million); food handling (1 project, worth, \$4.1 million); health (18 projects, worth \$128.4 million); nutrition (7 projects, worth \$54.6 million); water and sanitation (13 projects, worth, \$205.9 million); resettlement (7 projects, worth \$228.9 million); telecommunication (5 projects, worth, \$68 million).

### **Agreements reached with the CPA to ensure project viability**

The United Nations and the CPA have agreed that the project dossiers should contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- **UNOHCI project status checklist**, including annexes, sectoral overviews and exit strategies. The checklist is to provide all relevant information on completed projects, including those which have been implemented during several phases;
- **Narrative description of projects**: All basic information that would be needed to administer and manage the project and related files;
- **List of project assets, facilities, and their respective locations**;
- **Listing and status of all completed contracts**: The dossiers highlight the status of retention fees due, and any warranties in the listing. Original copies or photocopies of all contracts in the UN agency's file system will be added to the dossier. This is intended to provide guarantees to the Iraqi people that contractors who may have executed projects poorly are held liable;
- **Applicable acceptance and transfer documents**: These include assets loaned or on transfer to the local authorities and final acceptance certificates.

### **Ongoing projects to be completed after 21 November 2003**

An agreement has been reached with the CPA for the funding of ongoing projects that will continue beyond 21 November 2003. The CPA has accepted our recommendation, as also advocated by the local authorities, to fund all viable ongoing projects, estimated to total 159, worth \$1.08 billion. In a letter dated 23 October 2003 addressed to the United Nations Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator in the three northern governorates, the CPA Senior Advisor, Oil-for-Food Transition Team, North, reaffirmed that "it is the Coalition's decision to continue current projects in the Northern Governorates after November 21, provided that we reach a satisfactory outcome on the transfer of contracts involving third parties." He expected that all but a few of the ongoing projects, perhaps three or four that might not have fulfilled expectations, would be continued.

To facilitate this process, the CPA, the relevant Iraqi authorities and the United Nations, are considering the establishment of a central authority to manage such projects. Details of this proposed central authority are still being worked out and are primarily a matter between the CPA and the local authorities.

### **Transfer of Programme assets**

With regard to assets held by the United Nations on the last day of the Programme, it has been agreed that on 21 November 2003, inventory items will be categorised as follows:

- Stocks inside Iraq;
- Stocks held outside Iraq;
- Goods in transit.

In September 2003, it became apparent that the joint inventory of assets - to be carried out by the United Nations, CPA, and the local authorities - in the warehouses would not be physically possible, owing to the prevailing security situation and relocation of UN international staff. Since then, the CPA has informally agreed to accept items warehoused in the three northern governorates on the basis of inventories prepared by the United Nations, subject to sampling checks by the CPA. A team of experts from the CPA has been conducting the sampling of assets in the warehouses, and its initial assessment indicates that the inventory records provided by the UN agencies are accurate. The team will complete its work and submit a report thereon to the CPA Senior Advisor by 31 October 2003.

### **Disbursement of locally generated funds**

An agreement has also been reached on the disbursement of locally generated funds (LGF). The CPA approved the recommendation of the high-level tripartite working group, made up of senior representatives of the UN, the CPA and local authorities, to disburse locally generated funds (emanating from agricultural projects in the three northern governorates). In this context, I have approved \$7.7 million worth of agricultural projects, submitted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and endorsed by the CPA and UNOHCI, for funding under the LGF budget. Any LGF-funded projects that may continue beyond 21 November 2003, will be transferred to the CPA under the same terms as other ongoing projects, whose completion extend beyond the termination date of the Programme.

### **CPA responsibilities**

Ongoing projects and activities will be transferred in a manner similar to that for completed projects. The basic differences between the two categories of projects are the transfer of active international and local contracts and deeds between international firms and the United Nations agencies.

The CPA and the UN are reviewing such active international contracts in Amman, Jordan. Preliminary discussions in Amman have been positive and we, as well as the CPA, remain confident that agreement will be reached on the transfer of such active international contracts and deeds to the CPA prior to the termination of the Programme. Details on the status of negotiations in Amman regarding active international contracts will be provided to the 661 Committee later this week.

In accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 1483 (2003), the United Nations can transfer remaining responsibilities for the Programme only to the Authority. The CPA, in turn, will identify and subsequently handover the responsibilities to the appropriate Iraqi entities. However, it is of paramount importance that the United Nations not be held liable for any residual commitments or obligations that may arise from such contracts.

Similar negotiations will be carried out and completed with regard to active local contracts. Currently, the CPA, working mainly with national UN staff and the team composed of international staff that arrived recently, is reviewing active local contracts in Iraq. The CPA will make a determination as to which local Iraqi entities will eventually take over such contracts. We



are confident that arrangements for the handover of such contracts will also be completed before the termination of the Programme.

In cases where active international and local contractors demand terms and conditions that are not acceptable to the UN and/or the CPA, or it would be cost-effective to re-bid such contracts, the CPA may advise the UN to terminate them. In such event, the CPA should provide adequate legal commitments to ensure that the United Nations will not be held ultimately liable for any such decisions. Otherwise, the United Nations will have no alternative to retain adequate funds to cover such liabilities.

With regard to goods held/warehoused outside the country, largely in neighbouring states, special arrangements will need to be made. This is of particular importance for those UN agencies that, for a variety of reasons - including lack of security; lack of warehousing space in the three northern governorates as well as delays in contracting the items - maintain significant stocks outside Iraq. Currently, there are about \$25 million worth of goods either in transit or warehoused by the UN agencies outside Iraq, with additional goods being shipped by the suppliers. Given that after 21 November 2003 the UN will not have funds available from the escrow account to continue payments for the ongoing storage and ultimate transportation, the CPA and the Iraqi authorities will need to commit themselves to providing all necessary support for delivery into Iraq. As requested by the CPA, we are in the process of compiling detailed information on goods in transit and warehoused outside Iraq.

### **United Nations responsibilities**

As indicated earlier, the United Nations is committed to the timely preparation of dossiers on all projects and activities, to enable the CPA and the relevant Iraqi authorities to manage Programme assets once they are transferred. There are four types of dossiers: those for completed projects; ongoing projects scheduled to be completed prior to 21 November 2003; projects whose completion dates extend beyond 21 November 2003; and, finally, dossiers for all assets in warehouses, as well as relevant databases.

There is also a category of projects that will be terminated prior to 21 November 2003, which still requires an agreement on termination procedures and take-over of liabilities and commitments.

No agreement has as yet been reached with the CPA with regard to the databases established under the Programme that contain detailed information on issues such as key socio-economic indicators, mapping and various surveys, as well as matters which may also relate to intellectual property. We remain confident, however, that we will soon resolve our differences in that regard.

In addition to the various categories referred to earlier, special arrangements are being made with regard to goods in transit. According to UN agencies and programmes, more than \$55 million worth of outstanding goods are being shipped, while currently, there are already about \$25 million worth of goods either in transit or warehoused outside Iraq. Every effort is being made to minimize the quantity of goods to be delivered or still in transit, as at 21 November 2003.

The CPA will assume responsibility for the safety of ESC (13 per cent) account assets stored in warehouses and goods in transit within Iraq. Regarding goods in warehouses outside the country, the CPA would, on transfer of the relevant contracts and purchase orders, likewise assume responsibility for their safety.

Those commodities that relate to ongoing projects and activities will be assigned as part of the transfer of operational responsibility to the CPA and a similar arrangement will need to be made with regard to those items that are related to maintenance of stocks.

From 1999 onwards, the range of operations covered under the Programme grew exponentially to include at its conclusion some 24 sectors, including, inter alia, food, food handling, health, nutrition, electricity, agriculture and irrigation, education, transport and telecommunications, water and sanitation, housing, settlement rehabilitation, mine action, special allocation for especially vulnerable groups, oil industry spare parts and equipment, as well as construction.

Since the start of the implementation of the Programme in December 1996, about \$65 billion worth of oil was exported. More than \$46 billion of that amount was allocated to the Programme, after deductions for other accounts pursuant to relevant resolutions.

Under the Programme, more than \$30 billion worth of goods have been delivered to Iraq as a whole, including: foodstuffs (\$12 billion); food handling (\$2.2 billion); agriculture (\$2.4 billion); medicines (\$2.3 billion); water and sanitation (\$1.3 billion); electricity (\$2.2 billion); housing (\$1.7 billion); and for the oil sector (\$1.9 billion). In addition, before the start of the war in March 2003, the delivery pipeline contained goods to the value of some \$10 billion, fully funded. As at 27 October 2003, over \$7.56 billion worth of goods in the pipeline had been prioritised pursuant to resolutions 1472 (2003), 1476 (2003) and 1483 (2003).

A number of outstanding matters still remain to be resolved in consultations with the CPA and the relevant Iraqi authorities, with whom we have established the necessary working relations, both in Iraq, Amman and at the headquarters level. We remain confident, however, subject to security conditions, of meeting the challenge of terminating the Programme by 21 November 2003 pursuant to resolution 1483 (2003).

I wish to thank all parties for their understanding and cooperation with us in fulfilling all of the tasks entrusted to us by the Security Council.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate what I said at the informal consultations of the Council held on 29 September. The terrorist attack against the UN headquarters in Baghdad on 19 August 2003 was not only a heinous act of terror against the United Nations personnel serving in Iraq but also an attack on every single Member State of the United Nations. These acts of terror against humanitarian organizations have continued. The latest outrage, unequivocally condemned by the Secretary-General was the attack yesterday on the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The Secretary-General has rightly described this attack on the ICRC as "a crime against humanity."

On behalf of all my colleagues, I wish to express our deepest sympathy and most sincere condolences to the ICRC and to the families and loved ones of all those who were killed or injured.

I also wish to appeal to all Member States to close ranks and condemn in the strongest terms the terrorist attacks and take all necessary measures to provide for the safety and security of all humanitarian personnel. I also appeal to all Member States, which have not yet done so, to sign the Convention on the Safety of the United Nations and Associated Personnel.

**See also:** [Verbatim record of proceedings with comments by UN Security Council Members](#)