

By : DATUK SERI SYED HAMID ALBAR
Venue : WISMA PUTRA,PUTRAJAYA
Date : 15 APRIL 2003
Title : AT THE CHEQUE PRESENTATION CEREMONY TO THE IRAQI PEOPLE'S HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FUND

Excellencies,

Distinguished Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

ASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI WABARAKATUH AND GOOD AFTERNOON,

I am very delighted indeed to welcome all of you this afternoon to this Cheque Presentation Ceremony to the Iraqi People's Humanitarian Assistance Fund. "Tabung Kemanusiaan Pembelaan Rakyat Iraq" was launched by YAB Acting Prime Minister on 26 March 2003 in response to the event unfolding before us in Iraq. The government has contributed RM 10 million to the Fund.

2. At the onset, your presence and support towards this fund bears testimony to the ubiquitous of caring Malaysians towards the plight besetting the Iraqi people following the invasion by the Coalition Forces on Iraq.

3. For the record, allow me to express my gratitude and appreciation for your presence here in such a short notice. I value your support for this worthy cause. In recognition to your invaluable support, any contribution made under "Tabung Kemanusiaan Pembelaan Rakyat Iraq" would be exempted from taxation.

4. Following the United Nations sanctions on Iraq soon after the 1991 Gulf War, the Iraqi people have been subjected to deprivations and miseries. Since then, some 1.7 million Iraqis mostly children have died due to the hardships that they face. As if that was not enough, now under the pretext to liberalize Iraq and to rid Iraq from weapons of mass destruction, the Coalition Forces have invaded the sovereign state of Iraq defying the international community call to use diplomacy instead of military might.

5. Since the outbreak of war on 20 March 2003, we have seen disturbing images and sufferings of war beamed into our living rooms on a daily basis. The images of innocent civilians particularly the elderly, women and children being shot at, killed or maimed by the invading troops are very appalling indeed. Those who are injured lacked the proper medical care. As we speak, many more are awaiting basic treatment.

6. In this connection, as peace loving people we call upon the corporate sector, government agencies, and statutory bodies as well as individuals to come forward to join hands and contribute to this noble cause. Every dollar and cent contributed would go a long way towards uplifting the sufferings of the Iraqi people. This is where Malaysians can play an active role in providing humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people.

7. Before I conclude, I am encouraged by the response thus far. I would like to acknowledge and express our appreciation to the contributions made. Nevertheless, I would also like to call for more caring Malaysians to come forward to assist the Iraqi people in their time of need.

8. Let us pray that peace and justice will prevail for the people of Iraq.

WABILLAHITAUFIK WALHIDAYAH, WASSALAMUALAIKUM WARAHMATULLAHI TAALA WABARAKATUH.