



## Press Release

### **Saudi Arabia announces a \$5 million donation to the UN Refugee Agency in support of Iraqi Refugees in Syria and Jordan**

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, November 11, 2008 (UNHCR) - The UN Refugee Agency welcomes a \$5 million donation by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in support of its operations for Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan.

The donation comes as a response to UNHCR's humanitarian appeal issued this year to fund the agency's programs assisting Iraqi refugees.

"We would like to express our deep appreciation to the Government and people of Saudi Arabia for this generous donation which will undoubtedly assist UNHCR in responding to the humanitarian needs of Iraqi refugees in Syria and Jordan" said Hamdi Bukhari, UNHCR's acting Regional Representative in Riyadh. "We are confident that this donation will foster the strategic partnership between the Kingdom and UNHCR in the humanitarian arena" Bukhari added.

There are more than 4 million uprooted Iraqis. More than 2.2 million of them are displaced inside the country and another 2 million Iraqis who fled the country - the majority of them to Syria and Jordan. UNHCR has been calling for increased support for these two countries.

In 2008, UNHCR appealed for US\$261 million for its operations on behalf of the millions uprooted by the conflict in Iraq. Most of the refugees outside Iraq are in Syria and Jordan and are living in urban areas such as Damascus and Amman. Many of them are running out of money and finding it increasingly difficult to survive amid a dramatic increase in food prices across the region.

The UN Refugee Agency continues to appeal for more support and also encourages donors to provide bilateral support to the refugee-hosting countries whose schools, hospitals, public services and infrastructure are seriously overstretched because of the presence of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis they have so generously welcomed.

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