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PRESS RELEASE

Inauguration of New IDP Shelter Site in Darkar Ajam, Dohuk Governorate, to Accommodate More Than 4,800 IDPs

On 9 May 2016, a new shelter site for internally displaced persons (IDPs) established in Darkar Ajam, Zakho District, Dohuk Governorate, was inaugurated. With generous contributions from the Government of Japan, the IDP shelter site was established by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) providing prefabricated shelter units to accommodate more than 4,800 vulnerable IDPs, basic infrastructure, and public facilities such as a reproductive health clinic, a women's social center and a security building.

With the continuing terror and violence inflicted by the so-called State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the figures of IDPs in Iraq had reached 3.4 million as of April 2016. One of the governorates that have been receiving large numbers of displaced persons is Dohuk Governorate. While the governorate has stepped forward to support the IDPs, the severe budget crisis along with the protracted nature of the conflict have caused significant distress to both IDPs and host communities in Dohuk. Shedding light on this, H.E. Mr. Farhad Atrushi, Governor of Dohuk, expressed his appreciation to UN-Habitat and the Government of Japan for supporting the governorate in helping the most vulnerable people affected by the conflict.

The new World Urban Agenda necessitates embracing urbanization at all levels of human settlements across physical space. The inclusion of humanitarian situations in this agenda is essential in order to assist governments in addressing future challenges. In similar circumstances of long-term displacement, provisional shelter interventions often turn into slums. Inadequate and insecure shelter conditions also endanger women and girls, exposing them to higher risks of sexual and gender-based violence. Deputy Executive Director of UN-Habitat and UN Assistant Secretary-General Dr. Aisa Kirabo Kacyira underscored that the new durable shelter site will offer vulnerable IDPs, who have been suffering from severe weather conditions and lack of security, the ability to maintain dignified lives.

H.E. Mr. Fumio Iwai, Ambassador of Japan to Iraq, stated that the Government of Japan has already provided more than USD 220 million to Iraq since 2014 to support its humanitarian efforts, and will proudly continue to support returns of displaced persons to their homes and stabilization of liberated areas through reconstruction of housing and infrastructure.

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