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Assyrian Universal Alliance
الاتحاد الأشوري العالمي

Member: Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Assyrian Universal Alliance Reacts to Recent Allegations

February 4, 2007 – Recently, Mr. Praidon Darmoo, Deputy Secretary-General of the Assyrian Universal Alliance (AUA), visited Washington, DC as a member of an Iraqi delegation headed by Mr. Fawzi Hariri, Iraqi Minister of Industry. The purpose was to meet members of different committees in both the Senate and House of Representatives to gain support for Iraqi industrial plans. In addition, the delegation also met with several American companies to encourage them to invest in Iraq.

It was also a great opportunity for Mr. Darmoo and Assyrian-Iraqi Minister Hariri to meet with Assyrian-American Congresswoman Anna Eshoo. No agenda was set as it was a genuine courtesy meeting between two high-ranking Assyrian politicians.

The proposed Nineveh Plains resolution submitted by the Iraq Sustainable Democracy Project (ISDP) to Congresswoman Anna Eshoo was unknown to Mr. Praidon Darmoo prior to their meeting and was evidently unaware of such resolution.

AUA believed it had made it clear through its resolutions and struggle that it will not object to any project that will serve Assyrian interests and future in Iraq. Most particularly, AUA supports an Assyrian federal unit within the framework of the Republic of Iraq, as declared in its declaration of the 24th congress held in London, England on July 7 – 9, 2005. On January 20, 2007, three days following Mr. Darmoo's meeting with Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, this position was once again made clear to Mr. Michael Youash, Project Director of the Assyrian Academic Society Iraq Sustainable Democracy Project, during a telephone conversation with Dr. Emanuel Kamber, Secretary-General of the AUA. Dr. Kamber reiterated that the AUA rejects any national name for the Assyrian people other than "Assyrian" and disagrees with the border of the proposed administrative unit.

During an official visit of the AUA delegation to Iraq in 1973, the AUA was the first Assyrian organisation to officially request from the government of Iraq that Assyrians be granted an autonomous status on the land of their ancestors, located between the Greater Zab and Tigris rivers, under the jurisdiction of the central government of Iraq.

Today, it is vicious and disrespectful to all those concerned to suggest that Mr. Darmoo and Minister Hariri influenced Congresswoman Anna Eshoo's decision not to pursue the resolution at this time, as has been rumoured. Mr. Darmoo was not representing the AUA in any of these meetings.

This recent propaganda against the AUA and its Deputy Secretary-General only demonstrates why we Assyrians are failing to present a collective submission on behalf of our Assyrian people in Iraq. At a time when Assyrians are desperately searching for help to secure their future within a democratic, pluralistic, secular, and sovereign Iraq constituted of principles of democracy, rule of law, and guaranteed human rights, and equality for all citizens irrespective of their ethnic or religious background, some are desperately looking for excuses for their failed policy and tactics in gaining our rights in Iraq. AUA will not remain silent on such acts in the future. The AUA will take all necessary actions to expose these malicious and vicarious attacks while defending the interest of our people and the AUA.

In conclusion, the AUA will visit Congresswoman Anna Eshoo to make it clear to her and her staff all issues related to the visit of Mr. Darmoo. We hope she will take all the necessary steps to prevent such distortions in her future meetings with dignitaries and to clarify our position on issues related to the future of our Assyrian people in Iraq.

May God help our Assyrian people in Iraq and worldwide.

Executive Committee