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PRESS RELEASE

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United Nations publication “Iraq- Learning Lessons from Northern Ireland” launched at the Northern Irish Assembly

Baghdad and Belfast, 24 November 2009 - The publication “Iraq- Learning Lessons from Northern Ireland” was launched today at the Northern Ireland Assembly. The event was presided by the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Mr. William Hay MLA, in front of an invited audience of over 100 politicians and NGO representatives.

The publication builds on the March 2008 study visit of a delegation of the Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR) to Northern Ireland, organised by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in the framework of the project *Facilitating Reconciliation in Iraq through Constitutional Review and National Dialogue*, funded by the European Union through the UN Development Group Iraq Trust Fund.

During the visit, the Iraqi delegation engaged in dialogue with elected members of the Assembly, as well as with civic and community leaders in Northern Ireland. Drawing on the experience of the Northern Ireland peace process, the delegation noted techniques and approaches that had successfully been used in Northern Ireland and which would be relevant to adopt in the process of reaching a consensus on outstanding constitutional issues in Iraq.

UNAMI’s and UNOPS’ support to the process of Constitutional Review in Iraq targets crucial issues dividing the political scene such as power sharing, federalism and management of natural resources.

UNOPS’ commissioning of the publication from the Political Consultancy Stratagem aimed at making the lessons learned by the Iraqi delegation

available to a wider audience and the publication was distributed by UNOPS to members of the CoR and representatives of a number of ministries in Baghdad earlier this month.

The publication specifically tackled subjects such as leadership, power-sharing, dialogue and inclusion, equality, human rights and reconciliation, the role of Civil Society and security and public order, all instrumental for reaching a peaceful solution to the Northern Ireland conflict and issues of great importance in the process of promoting national dialogue in Iraq.

Another study visit to Northern Ireland was organized by UNAMI and UNOPS in May 2009 as part of the project *Support to Reconciliation Strategies for Iraq* funded by the Federal Republic of Germany. This visit was mainly targeting members of the Article 23 Committee of the Iraqi CoR, charged with resolving disputed issues over the Iraqi city of Kirkuk.

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For more information or to obtain an electronic copy of the publication, please contact Mr. Adam Styp-Rekowski at adams@unops.org or telephone +962 796386380