

Iraq Ministry of Health Weekly Update

MOH–OCPA Health Team Current Policies and Initiatives, Vol. 14, Wednesday, September 10, 2003

HIGHLIGHTS:

- **NEW MINISTER OF HEALTH ANNOUNCED**
- **AMBASSADOR BREMER VISITS MINISTER OF HEALTH**
- **MR HAVEMAN BRIEFS AT THE PENTAGON**

Iraq Governing Council Appoints Interim Minister of Health

On Tuesday, September 2, 2003, 25 new ministers appointed by Iraq's Governing Council assumed office, including Dr Khudair Abbas, the new interim Minister of Health. Dr Abbas arrived last week from London to assume his duties.

Originally from Basra, Dr Abbas attended medical school and practiced in Baghdad. After 18 months of military service and another 18 months serving as a general practitioner in rural health, Dr Abbas began a general surgery residency as a senior house officer at Basra General Hospital, and continued to work in Basra in general surgery and orthopedics. In 1979, Dr Abbas moved to Dublin, Ireland to complete a 14 month fellowship. He practiced at various UK hospitals as a general and orthopedic surgeon. In 1990, Dr Abbas received a fellowship as a staff grade general surgeon at King George hospital in east London. He continues to practice general surgery, specializing in breast surgery. Dr Abbas is married and has 5 children; two boys and three girls.

Mr Haveman, the Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Health, formally welcomed Dr Abbas to the Ministry of Health on his arrival. Dr Abbas stated he was excited to be back in Iraq and serving as the interim Minister of Health. He pledged to serve the healthcare needs of all of Iraq.

In announcing the appointment of 25 new ministers, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, the Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, stated

"Now each ministry is run by an Iraqi appointed by Iraqis. These newly appointed ministers, who serve at the pleasure of (Governing) Council, have important responsibilities; they run the ministries, conducting the day-to-day business of the government of Iraq".

The Ministry of Health welcomes Dr Abbas and looks forward to serving with him. The CPA/MOH team of Senior Advisor James Haveman will continue to advise and assist Dr Abbas and the Ministry of Health in meeting its objectives and responsibilities.

Ambassador Bremer Visits Ministry of Health

Ambassador L. Paul Bremer III, the Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, paid an official visit to the Ministry of Health on Tuesday to meet with Dr Abbas, the interim Minister of Health and Senior Advisor James Haveman from the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Ambassador Bremer toured the Ministry of Health building, which had suffered years of neglect and recent looting. He witnessed firsthand the fruits of an ongoing \$1.7M renovation project. After the tour, Ambassador Bremer met with Dr Abbas and Mr Haveman. Ambassador Bremer presented medical textbooks to Dr Abbas and the Ministry of Health. These textbooks were donated by Dr Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda Maryland.



**Dr Khudair Abbas accepts
medical textbooks from
Ambassador
Paul Bremer.**

Mr Haveman Briefs at the Pentagon

Mr James Haveman, the Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Health, briefed the media at the Pentagon briefing room on September 4, 2003.



**Mr Haveman briefs at the
Pentagon**

The focus of the briefing was on the state of healthcare in Iraq; its recent history, rehabilitation efforts to date, and the strategic framework set in place for the future. This strategic plan was developed by an international group of representatives from the World Health Organization, the World Bank, European Commission, Coalition Provisional Authority Ministry of Health and many others focused on improving the healthcare situation in Iraq. The complete transcript of the briefing is at <http://www.pentagon.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20030904-0643.html>