

Iraq Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research

Weekly Update

CPA Higher Education Team Current Policies and Initiatives, Issue6, Saturday, 31 August 2003
http://www.cpa-iraq.org/ministries/higher_education.html

This week's briefs:

Good bye to our Senior Advisor: After 4 months on the job as Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Dr. Andrew P. N. Erdmann bids farewell to Iraq. His dedication, support and tireless effort to improve Iraqi higher education have resulted in significant gain by the ministry. We will all miss him greatly.

Visit from US university presidents:

Three US university presidents are here in Iraq conducting personal assessments of the universities in Iraq. The CPA higher education team has been working closely with Peter McPherson and Charles Greenleaf from the CPA Finance team to arrange the visit of Dr. Ray Bowen of Texas A&M University, Dr. Lattie Coor from Arizona State University, and Dr. Greg O'Brien from the University of New Orleans. They have already begun their tour of major universities in the Baghdad area. CPA MHESR team have also arranged a meeting with the leaders of all the major institutions of higher education during the Advisory Council meeting, as well as a trip to universities in Northern Iraq. We hope that during their one week visit they will gain a vital on-the-ground perspective of the current needs of Iraq higher education and that they will become ambassadors for Iraqi higher education upon their return to the United States.

Good bye to our Senior Advisor:

Of 25 ministries and growing, Dr. Erdmann was the longest serving Senior Advisor. Prior to his arrival in Baghdad, he spent a month in Kuwait City working on Foreign Ministry issues. When he arrived in Baghdad, he filled a much needed position as Senior Advisor of MHESR. Accomplishments during his tenure are many, but some of the highlights include:

- All universities reopened to students on or about May 15
- Over 90% of students finished out the academic year

- Received significant budget increase for the Ministry
- Integrated the Kurdish universities with the rest of the Iraqi universities
- Eliminated admission biases preventing women and other minority groups from attending universities of their choice

Of course, if we list all his major accomplishments, this newsletter would run dozens of pages. He has returned to the State Department and we wish him well.

Operating Budgets for the Remainder of the Year

Critical to the autonomy and effective functioning of higher educational institutions throughout Iraq is ensuring university and institute leaders have access again to reliable operating budgets. Therefore, restoration of operating budgets for all higher educational institutions has been a top priority.

Universities have started receiving much needed budgets to refurbish and improve their universities. Already, universities are making many improvements around their campuses.

There are some universities that still have not accessed their accounts. Please encourage universities in your area to contact the MHESR Finance Director General, if they have not done this yet, to ensure the establishment of the specific mechanisms needed for the rapid and effective transfer of these funds.

Next year's initial budget estimation was due 25 August. Now comes the hard part in defending the MHESR's request to the Ministry of Finance.

University Reconstruction Effort:

Using the much needed budget from academic year 03, the majority of the universities are hard at work refurbishing their campuses. Some universities are

working 24 hours a day to improve the buildings around the campus. With all the work that's being done, it's hard to recognize some of the campuses. CPA MHESR's goal is to make significant positive physical changes around the campus so that students won't recognize the campus they left in July.

Below is a before picture of the Electrical Engineering department at the University of Technology. I'll send after picture in next weeks newsletter.



New Opportunities for Foreign Study

More opportunities to study abroad are coming in every week. The CPA Ministry of Higher Education team is promoting such opportunities to bring the world closer to the faculty and students of Iraq.

The US State Department is interested in starting Fulbright Scholarship programs with Iraqi universities. Dr. (LTC) Stephen Curda, current Acting Senior Advisor, was recently in Washington DC. and met with key government officials in charge of Fulbright Scholarships to discuss new opportunities to help end the isolation of Iraqi students, scholars, and scientists. The State Department is committed to supporting Iraqi higher education and is calling for 10 masters level Fulbright Scholarships to help

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restore the once strong academic ties
between the US and Iraq.

Events Calendar:

August 30 – Advisory Counsel Meeting,
Hosted by University of Technology

August 30-Sept 2 – Trip to Sulaimaniyah
and Mosul with the 3 visiting US university
presidents