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International Community Committed to Help Iraq Expand Oil Production

U.S. Ambassador Christopher R. Hill accompanied a high-level delegation of British, Dutch, Japanese, and Italian diplomats to Basra today to promote the international community's commitment to help Iraq develop its oil sector for the benefit of the local and national economy. The United States and other countries are seeking to leverage the expertise and resources of the international oil industry to accelerate the development of Basra's oil sector to generate growth and jobs for the Iraqi people.

Highlighting the international community's commitment to invest in Iraq's most important oil producing region, Ambassador Hill stressed, "The oil here belongs to the Iraqi people and the international community is doing its part to help ensure that every Iraqi citizen benefits from its vast potential."

During the visit the diplomats participated in meetings with Iraqi government and oil industry officials as well as executives from the international oil industry to gain first-hand knowledge of the progress that has been made and the challenges that lie ahead.

The group, composed of British Ambassador John Jenkins, Italian Ambassador Maurizio Melani, Dutch Charge D'Affaires Lars Tummers, and Japanese Charge D'Affaires Katsuhiko Takahashi, viewed several oil facilities and had a walking tour of an oil-drilling derrick in Iraq's largest oil field to see first-hand how the international oil industry is applying the latest technologies to accelerate efforts to expand production.

After a working lunch at the British Consulate General, the day's program concluded with an open discussion with executives from BP, ENI, Shell, ExxonMobil, and prominent Iraqi businesspeople on ways to enhance mutual cooperation, overcome hurdles and achieve sustained momentum to develop the full potential of Iraq's oil industry for the benefit of Iraq's economy.

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