



U.S. EMBASSY - BAGHDAD

2008 Provincial Reconstruction Team News

-PRT Provides Medical Supplies, Engineer Training for Iraq-

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Al Kut, Wasit Province - The Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT) in this eastern province recently addressed a critical medical need when it partnered with Provincial Council members to supply 3,000 Blood Storage Bags to the Al Kut Blood Bank.

In a press conference at the Blood Bank held to mark the event, PRT political officer, George Learned, thanked the Iraqi health care workers who “perform a vital service to their fellow citizens.”

Learned also acknowledged the hard work by the Iraqi Security Forces who “made the event possible by ensuring security in Al Kut,” and stressed the importance of security for all future PRT development and reconstruction efforts.

Learned emphasized that, as security continues to improve, the PRT and Coalition Forces remain eager to work in Al Kut neighborhoods such as “Zuwarijat, Anwar and Shuhada” and other areas in Wasit that are especially in need of assistance.

Three Provincial Council members, Dr. Salwa Mohammed Ahmed, Meithum Eskander Mohammed, and Sa’ad Sharhan Farhan also attended the event. Farhan noted that “actions like this are noticed and have a big impact on the Al Kut population” and described the exchange as “continuing to build the close relationship between Iraq and the Coalition.”

The Provincial Council was instrumental in facilitating the donation of the medical supplies to the medical establishment in Al Kut. Building the capacity of local authorities and governing bodies to use their own resources to address critical needs has become the top priority of the 29 PRTs operating in all 18 of Iraq’s provinces.

On a non-medical front, the PRT also worked with the Wasit Engineers Union on two professional development courses the Union recently conducted for Iraqi engineers in installation, operations and maintenance of electrical generators, and the installation and maintenance of high voltage electrical networks.

The PRT-funded course leveraged the expertise of professors from the Engineer College of Wasit University to instruct twenty Iraqi engineers from the public and private sector for a total cost of less than \$9,000.



Department of State PRT officer George Learned is interviewed on local television as a shipment of 3,000 Blood Storage bags are delivered in at the Al-Kut Blood Bank.

The courses are part of a larger Engineer Development Program targeted at improving Iraqi engineering capacity on specific projects programmed in the 2008 Wasit Provincial Council capital budget with the intent of raising GOI budget execution rates.

The Wasit PRT has already funded eight such courses and programmed an additional 36 with funds supplied by the U.S. military cooperating with the PRT on development projects in the Province.