

The Diyala Declaration

Members of the Diyala Provincial Council, Governor's Office, and selected Directors General met May 3-4, 2009 to discuss the challenges the province is facing and their vision for Diyala four years into the future.

Devastated by war, terrorism and drought, the province is still plagued with security problems and lack of essential services. A large number of people have been displaced, both within the province and outside it. Its agriculturally-based economy has been devastated, its education sector has been severely damaged, and its provincial and local governments require renewal, transparency and accountability.

Determined to overcome these challenges, the participants outlined the following four-year goals, which, undertaken in accordance with established law and regulations, would set Diyala on a path to peace and prosperity.

Security

- 1) Secure internal and international borders, taking full advantage of modern technology
- 2) Well-coordinated security forces
- 3) Iraqi security forces reflect the composition of the community
- 4) Communities play an active role in ensuring security, with special attention given to tribal reconciliation
- 5) Well-trained professional security forces, protecting the population based on accurate intelligence
- 6) Detainees are processed in a timely manner in accordance with the law and respecting human rights

Capable Provincial Government

- 1) Separate and effective judicial, executive and legislative branches
- 2) Meaningful monitoring of the executive authority by the Provincial Council -- particularly of contracting, hiring and firing government employees, the financial expenditures of the government, and nepotism -- with consideration for valid laws, including the law for disciplining state officials
- 3) A provincial government that provides security, the rule of law, essential services, and economic development
- 4) A provincial government that ensures the well-being of the population, particularly the vulnerable, widows, children, orphans, the handicapped and others with special needs
- 5) A provincial government that obtains the financial resources it needs, and spends its money carefully, wisely, and transparently
- 6) A provincial government that seeks out and encourages the gifted and talented
- 7) A provincial government that uses modern technology to communicate and store data

Economic Development/Jobs (working in concert with Provincial Investment Committee)

Agricultural sector

- 1) Enough water to support a thriving agricultural sector
- 2) Rehabilitation of farmland
- 3) Modern agricultural systems, especially for palms and citrus fruits (for example, model farms, advanced research stations, and advisory centers)
- 4) More outlets to sell local agricultural products (for example, a supermarket in every qada)
- 5) Effective support/financing for farmers

Industrial sector

- 1) Modern factories for cement, bricks, and pre-cast concrete
- 2) Modern factories for processed foods (dates, juices, pastes, etc.)
- 3) Modern refinery and chemical fertilizer plants
- 4) Modern natural gas electric plants
- 5) Increased petroleum production

Tourism sector

- 1) An established and growing tourist trade (for example, tourist sites, hotels)

Financial sector

- 1) Enough banks in all cities
- 2) Readily accessible personal financing in accordance with Islamic law
- 3) Readily accessible commercial and small business financing

Commercial sector

- 1) Duty-free zones wherever feasible
- 2) International companies find Diyala attractive and are operating fully in the province (for example, cars, pumps, agricultural products)
- 3) Modern markets, especially in cities

Essential Services

- 1) Everyone has the drinking water they need
- 2) Everyone has the electricity that they need
- 3) Well-functioning sewage and garbage collection systems
- 4) Provincial centers for quality control in the fields of environment and health
- 5) Modern and clean cities
- 6) Basic health needs are met for all citizens
- 7) Adequate roads and bridges
- 8) The rights of the consumer are adequately protected

Education Sector

- 1) Modern curricula at all levels
- 2) Outstanding teachers
- 3) Enough teachers
- 4) Adequate facilities (for example, buildings, computers, lab equipment)

- 5) Scientific centers for advanced research
- 6) More private sector educational institutions operating under the supervision and observation of the Education Ministry
- 7) Special needs children get the support they need at their schools

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) and Refugees

- 1) Clear understanding of refugee/IDP numbers, reasons, and definitions
- 2) Security is established prior to IDPs returning home
- 3) Services are established prior to IDPs returning home
- 4) A higher committee and a local committee are operating successfully in support of returning IDPs. The Provincial Council is also supporting their return (for example, Members have regularly visited IDPs and encouraged their return)
- 5) All IDPs that wish to return are able to return quickly and in an orderly fashion
- 6) IDPs are appropriately compensated for their loss, including agricultural and industrial properties

We the undersigned pledge ourselves to exert the greatest possible effort to achieve these goals, consulting closely with the citizens of Diyala and seeking their support.