

Documents of the First Conference of Al-Amal Iraqi Association

Communique on the first (inauguration) conference

On 25th and 26th February 1995, the Iraqi Al-Amal Association held its first (inauguration) conference. In attendance at the conference, which took place in Dan hagg-holland, were delegates from international humanitarian organizations, representatives of the association's branch in Iraqi Kurdistan and members of the association in Europe and the Middle East.

The association aims to relieve the suffering of the Iraqi people arising as a result of the second gulf war. It was formed by a group of Iraqis including the famous poet: sa'adi Youssef in 1992, and has been supported by volunteers forming links with international and Arab humanitarian groups. Among its early achievements was the establishment of a base in Iraqi Kurdistan, from which it has been able to initiate a number of social and medical projects. The first conference was held at a time when conditions in Iraq reached a state of severe deterioration, and against a background of contamination, lack of medicine and a break-down in the health, social and educational infrastructure. The marked deterioration in conditions inside Iraq continues to threaten the social order and the very survival of much of the Iraqi population. For the welfare of humanity was adopted as a central theme at the conference, reflecting the association's twin aims of social development and humanitarian aid. The general report, the financial report, the report from Iraqi Kurdistan branch, and the constitution were all discussed, and the conference agreed a strategic plan for a program of development which embraced the diversity of ethnic groups, religious and political beliefs to be found within Iraqi society.

The conference reviewed the consequences of the economic sanction imposed on the Iraqi people, and concluded that the continuation of sanction for over four years had devastated Iraqi society. The sanctions effectively constituted an abuse of human rights. There was an appeal for international support to secure the delivery and distribution of food and medicine directly to the Iraqi people, and allow international medical teams to work in public and private health institutions, particularly in the southern regions, presently denied humanitarian assistance. Deep sorrow and concern were expressed at the continued fighting in Iraqi Kurdistan, particularly as human loss and destruction adds to the existing suffering of the population and interrupts development in the region. The conference appealed to all factions to resolve their differences peacefully and without violence, and avoid inflicting further harm on the civilian population.

The participation of representatives from the international humanitarian organizations facilitated a valuable exchange of experiences leading to proposals for the development of activities and collaboration between the association and other

international humanitarian organizations. The conference attached great value to the assistance provided by international aid organizations for Iraqi people in general and to the association in particular.

Finally, the delegates elected a new management committee which, in its first meeting, divided the responsibilities between its members and elected Mr. Noaman Muna as its chairman.

Letter of appeal for Iraqi Kurdistan

To the government of Iraqi Kurdistan

To the parliament of Iraqi Kurdistan

To the Iraqi Kurdistan front

The first inauguration conference for Iraqi AL-Amal association held in Dan Hagg\ Holland on 25-26 February 1995, attended by a number of international humanitarian organizations, expresses its deep sorrow and concern for the continued fighting in Iraqi Kurdistan, which adds further pain to the suffering of the Kurdistan people and hinders international and local efforts to rebuild the region and provide assistance to local inhabitants. We appeal to you to cease all forms of military conflict and the use of force, and to adopt peaceful dialogue as the only acceptable means of resolving conflict and restoring civic peace in order to continue the rebuilding programme and the development activities in the service of humanity and its safety and progress.

Summary of the general report

Introduction

The political, economical and social consequences of the second gulf war were far reaching for the people of Iraq and the region in general. The result of the war and its aftermath of destruction, repressing and displacement of people throughout Iraq exposed a sense of anger and sorrow among the Iraqi community abroad which initiated a number of relief and solidarity projects. Al-Amal was established in the midst of these conditions. It was formed by a circle of friends living in Syria with the aim of providing aid to relief the suffering of the Iraqi people and the establishment of hope in a better and honorable life Arabs, Kurds and other nationalities.

Response in Iraqi Kurdistan was overwhelming and soon a branch was formed, in association with head-office, initiated a number of social and medical projects. Our community in Britain responded, through the Iraqi victims of war appeal, with financial and moral support which was vital for the setting up of our first base in Iraq. We took it upon ourselves, and through our activities, to establish the principles of voluntary work, cooperation and support among people. Our aim has been, as in Iraqi Kurdistan to extend the social participation in rebuilding the region. Our experience is still young and requires additional efforts to develop the positive aspects of our work in order to respond to the changing social circumstances. The conference should draw up a strategic plan with the following principles in mind:

- 1- al-Amal is humanitarian organization that works towards mobilizing all those who wish to participate in its activities regardless of race or religious or political belief.
- 2- the activities of the association should be directed towards improving the social fabric and behavioral welfare of the people.
- 3- The training of association's social workers and leading activist, particularly young people and women, who are conversant with the aims and objectives of the association, is essential for the development of our programme.
- 4- To safeguard the success of projects, it is necessary to conduct a needs assessment study, and to research all aspects of the projects.
- 5- Although all projects are, initially, financed by funding organizations, it is important, that the continuity of these projects should be based on self-financing basis.

In establishing our strategy, we should build links with other local and Iraqi organizations and study their successes and limitation.

We should take this opportunity to thank the Iraqi community association in Britain, the Iraqi victim of war appeal in Britain, the Iraqi students society in Germany, the society for solidarity with the Iraqi people in Belgium, the relief committee for the Iraqi people in America, and other members of our community for their hard work, support and financial assistance to the associations and its projects.

The conference of our branch in Iraqi Kurdistan was an important step towards building the bases of the association in Iraq and towards its effectiveness.

External affairs

We endeavored to increase our locally and international to gain experience, build up ties with international organizations, and co-operate with them on specific projects. The first success was achieved when we organized a visit by medical team to Iraqi Kurdistan in August 1992. The team consisted of representatives from the Scourc Populaire Libanais, the Scourc Populaire Francais and Belgian Oxfam, and, together with our medical team, provided services and medicine to the public during the visit. After three years of work, we have successfully linked with international organization to launch a number of projects in Iraqi Kurdistan: a clinic in Erbil, a clinic in Sulaimania, a sewing workshop for displaced Arab families in Shaklawa, a mobile veterinary clinic in Kalar and Kufri, and building a school in Chouman, which is under construction.

We participated in the Scourc Populaire Libanais's conference in 1993 and received great support and encouragement from them. We extend our gratitude, thanks and appreciation to the Scourc Populaire Libanais (SPL), the Scourc Populaire Francais (SPF), Kindernotbrücke (KNB) of Germany, Belgian Oxfam, Wadi Society of Germany and the Greek committee for international democratic solidarity. We participated in the regional meetings of the Arab non-governmental organizations held in Lebanon in 1994 and 1995, and received warmest support for our proposals and appeal to lift sanctions on the Iraqi people. It is important that we attend the forum of social development summit in Copenhagen to be held later in the year. For that purpose, we have asked our members in Denmark to represent the association during the summit. By invitation from the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) we had an opportunity to visit the country and participate in the international seminar on violence against women, which was held in preparation for the World Women Conference in Peking to be held in summer 1995. The conference should clearly identify ways for establishing greater links with Arab and international organizations, which would require:

1- Expanding the links with Arab and international organizations on mutual support basis.

2- Participating in regional Arab meetings to build common grounds for continued cooperation and support between Arab NGO's.

3- Participating, through our branches, in extending the links with our Iraqi community abroad.

Conditions in Iraq

It is clear that four years international economic sanctions have turned into a punishment of the Iraqi people. The horrific conditions which engulfed the entire nation are driving people to the edge of despair. They are humiliated, hungry and ill, a total collapse of social order. The standard of living is deteriorating prices are escalating, the value of the Iraqi dinar is plummeting, etc. it is becoming a phenomena in Iraq that people of all strata are selling their furniture, house hold equipment or even house fixtures to survive. This has led to break down in security and an alarming increase in crimes. Child mortality has increased from 4.2% before the war to 22.7% now. The young people of Iraq lived their entire lives in wars only to face unemployment afterwards. There are thousands of widows with children to feed. Over a million Iraqi have emigrated including highly qualified.

What is to be done? What is our role? How can we help and extend our support to our people and families?

The conference is a unique opportunity to come up with realistic strategy for our future action, in association with the international organisations and the international community, to take initiatives in the supply of food, medicine and other aid directly to the people of Iraq. We stress the need for the lifting of sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people. This is challenge facing each and every one of us, and as a humanitarian organization.

We express deep sorrow and concern at the continued fighting in Iraq Kurdistan during the last few months, particularly as human loss and destruction add to the existing suffering of the population and interrupt development in the region. This situation threatens the young experiment in Iraqi Kurdistan and has delayed the implementation of some of our project.

The association's internal affairs

The co-ordination committee was formed in Damascus after the initiation of the association. The famous poet: Sa'adi Youssef took responsibility of chairing the committee.

With few people, lack of experience and short resources, the initial steps were slow. Nonetheless, all the preparations were completed including the setting up of constitution, bank account, etc. contact with the Iraqi community abroad and international organizations was made. With special effort, the branch in Iraqi Kurdistan was set up and was successfully licensed on 23 June 1992. The work of the co-ordinating committee is voluntary. It deals with all aspects of management and support necessary of the projects, time is as short as ever to complete all the tasks, and without a permanent office, the co-ordinating committee relies on own resources to carry out the work. We suffer particularly from shortage in publicity materials. Only recently we managed to complete the brochure and two video films.

Thanks are due to all friends who supported the co-ordinating committee and helped, by their participation, to secure the existence of the Al-Amal. We have always debated the need for a general conference for association. The branch in Iraqi Kurdistan held its first conference in September 1994, which was a unique occurrence among all the local humanitarian organization. Today, as we have gathered assuming responsibility to execute noble humanitarian goals assuring that the first conference of Al-Amal will open a new stage for the association and its future work for the welfare of humanity.

Summary of the report from the branch in Iraqi Kurdistan

After the declaration of the safe haven in Kurdistan and the imposition of double sanctions against the area, many international humanitarian organisations set up branches and a number of local organizations including Al-Amal (hewa) association emerged to provide aid and assistance to the people of the region.

The branch established a clinic in Erbil in April 1993 and a clinic in Sulaimania in May 1994. The two clinics faced great pressure at first due to the large number of patients and lack of medicine and equipment. We have, to a large extent, overcome these problems with co-operation from the medical staff and help from international aid organization. An operational procedure was set up to achieve self-financing in the future. The pharmacy has its own procedure based on the sale of medicine at 50% of the prices at other pharmacies. Our aim is to develop the clinics into full medical centers.

The mobile mill, set up in Dahok, was eventually sold and replaced by two smaller Milles. With assistance from wadi society of Germany, the branch printed and handed over to the ministry of education 3500 English text books for schools. Wadi society also proposed a swing workshop for the Arab families displaced in Shaklawia which we completed, but, due to internal fighting recently, the project was

temporarily suspended. A mobile veterinary clinic was set up with support from the Greek committee for international democratic solidarity. The clinic will be operational in spring 1995 and will serve 100 villages. We have recently set up a project for the construction of secondary school with 12 classes in chouman supported by scours popular francais. A technical committee is supervising all matters relating to project which is expected to commence in spring 1995. On the cultural side we have organized courses in foreign languages, a children arts exhibition and a computer course in Sulaimaniya. The first conference of the branch was held in September 1994 and new 9 members of administrative committee was elected. A supervisory financial committee of 3 was also elected. We have established strong links with local and international organisations and have participated in their meetings.

Constitution

One: name

The name of the association shall be Iraqi AL-Amal association hereinafter called the association.

Two: headquarter

The association shall be based in Baghdad (temporally in Damascus, Syria) and shall have the right to open branches in and outside Iraq.

Three: theme

The theme of the activities of the association shall be "for the welfare of humanity".

Four: the nature of the association

The association shall be a general humanitarian organization with special emphasis on projects with social development nature.

Five: aims and objective

5.1. The provision of medical, social and humanitarian aid for the victims of war, social injustice and displacement through:

- Medical projects such as clinics and hospitals.

- Social development programs which contribute towards social, culture and health education.

- Mother \ child projects, such as nurseries and social centers.

5.2 Participation in projects which reverse the effect of two gulf wars.

5.3. Participation in activities which enhance the freedom of the population and promote civil rights, with particular reference to the problems of refugees.

5.4 Participation in projects for the protection of the environment.

5.5 Participation in appropriate international activities to promote the objectvies of the association.

Part one: membership

Six: membership

Membership shall be open to individual adults who agree to abide the constitution and willing to participate in the voluntary work of the association. All memberships shall be subject to the approval of the general management committee.

Seven: type of membership

7.1. Full membership

7.2. Affiliated membership

7.3. Honorary membership

Eight: duties and rights of full members

8.1. Direct participation in all aspects of activities necessary for the well-being of the association and its aims and objectives.

8.2. Have the right for nomination to and participation in all elections of the association and the monitoring of its activities.

Nine: duties and rights of affiliated members

Temporary participation in the activities, or, specific activity of the association. Affiliated members shall have no right for nomination to or participation in any election of the association.

Ten: honorary members

The general assembly of the association may elect honorary members from those persons who have provided special services to humanity.

Eleven: termination of membership

11.1 Every member shall have the right to terminate his\her membership.

11.2 The membership shall be terminated if the member does not participate in the activities of the association for a total period of six months in any period between two ordinary general assembly meetings.

11.3 The general management committee may, by a majority of 2 to 1, terminate the membership of any person has been guilty of fraud or misuse of assets of the association or carried out action prejudicial to the association or its objectives, provided that the person shall have the right of appeal in writing to the earliest general assembly meeting whose decision shall be final. The general management committee shall be required to take the necessary legal actions to recover any losses due to the action by the said person.

11.4 membership of the association shall cease on the death of the member.

Twelve: records

The general management committee shall keep a record of the members of the association.

Part two

Thirteen: authorities

Authorities of the association shall be in the following descending order: 13.1 the general assembly

13.2 The general management committee

13.3 The financial and management supervisory committee

13.4 The management committee of the branches.

Fourteen: the general assembly

14.1 The general assembly shall be the highest authority in all matters related to the association and shall have the right to dissolve the association or invest or use its assets in whatever way appropriate. The decisions of the general assembly shall be mandatory on all other authorities of the association.

14.2 The general assembly shall consist of:

1- Members of the general management committee.

2- Representatives of the branches and bases of the association whose number shall be determined by the general management committee.

3- Social, culture and scientific persons selected by the general management committee in consultation with the branches and bases, provided always that their number shall not exceed 15% of the number of delegates in 1,2 and 3 above.

14.3 The general assembly shall be held at such time and place as the general management committee shall determine being no more than two years after the holding of the proceeding general assembly. The general management committee shall give at least two months' notice prior to the date of the meeting. the general management committee or the third members of the association shall have the right to call an emergency or special general assembly meeting at any time.

Fifteen: business of the general assembly

15.1 to consider and agree the politics of the association and its activities, and the duties of the general management committee and the branches, and the internal rules and procedures provided that the general management committee and the branches shall consult on specific conditions appertaining to the branches in implementing the resolutions of the general assembly.

15.2 To consider and approve the account of the association and consider new resources for the continuation and broadening of the services and activities of the association.

15.3 To consider and approve the report of the general management committee on the work and activities of the association between general assembly meetings.

15.4 To consider and approve future activities of the association.

15.5 To consider and approve proposals to alter the constitution.

15.6 To elect by secret ballots the members of the general management committee and members of the financial and management supervisory committee.

Sixteen: rules and procedures at meetings

16.1 The presence of a simple majority of members of the general assembly, the general management committee or the management committee of the branches shall constitute a quorum at the respective meeting.

16.2 The meetings of the general assembly shall be chaired by committee elected from amongst the delegates.

16.3 subject to the provisions of clauses 11.3, 16.4 and 16.5, all questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those voting at the said meeting.

16.4 alterations to the constitution shall be decided by a two third majority of those voting at the general assembly meeting.

16.5 dissolution of the association and the transfer of its assets to other similar charitable organization shall be decided by two third majority of those voting at the general assembly meeting.

Seventeen: the general management committee.

17.1 The policies and general management of the association and the supervision of its branches and bases shall be directed by the general management committee.

17.2 The general management committee shall determine the sphere of activities of the association and its procedure.

17.4 The general management committee shall meet as necessary but not less than twice a year.

Eighteen: records of the association

In conducting its business, the general management committee shall keep the following records:

18.1 Minutes of meetings and resolutions.

18.2 Record of members

18.3 Financial records

18.4 Any other necessary records.

Nineteen: the formation of the general management committee

The general management committee shall consist of:

-Two chairperson

-Two vice- chairperson

-the secretary

-Three members with duties relevant to the need of the association.

At least half the members of the general management committee shall be from adjacent areas.

Twenty: duties of the members of the general management committee

20.1 The chairperson shall chair the meetings of the general management committee. One of the vice-chairpersons shall take the place of the chairpersons in his\her absence and shall have, in these instances, full authority as chairperson.

20.3 The secretary shall co-ordinate the activities of the association between the head

Office and the branches, and shall, in consultation with the chairpersons and the vice-chairpersons, prepare the agenda for the meetings of the general management committee, and shall keep record of the meetings and decimate the resolutions, and shall deal with the correspondence of the association of communications.

20.4 The responsibilities of other members of the general management committee shall be determined in accordance with their sphere of activities.

Twenty one: the financial and management supervisory committee

21.1 The financial and management supervisory committee shall be elected by the general assembly and shall consist of chairperson and two members.

21.2 The committee shall supervise all aspects of the activities of the association and its method of operation, and shall have the right to review all records and reports of the association.

21.3 The committee shall report to the general management committee with its observations and recommendations, provided always that the general management committee shall have the right to accept or reject such recommendations.

21.4 the committee shall submit a full report the work of the association and its committees tom the general assembly and shall identify areas of differences or disagreement with the general management committee, and shall have the right to call an emergency or special meeting of the general assembly.

Twenty two: the branches and bases of the association

22.1 the general management committee shall have the right to open branches for the association inside and outside Iraq, and shall assist in the creation of societies outside Iraq in accordance with the specific conditions and regulations of the particular country.

22.2 The humanitarian societies outside Iraq shall have the right to link with association as branches or as affiliated members or in any other form of associations seen fit by the said societies.

22.3 Each branch shall hold its general assembly once every two years to consider and approve the financial and management reports and future activities.

22.4 The general assembly of the branch shall elect, by secret ballot, a management committee to conduct the business of the branch and supervise its activities.

22.5 The number of members of the management committee of the branch shall be determined in accordance with the circumstances and the abilities and specialisation of the branch.

22.6 The management committee shall have the right to create bases for the association in countries where there is not sufficient number to form a branch.

Part three: finances of the association

Twenty three: source of income

The Income of the association shall be raised from:

23.1 Subscriptions.

23.2 Donations and gifts.

23.3 Income from investment of assets of the association.

23.4 non-conditional support and grants from official and non-official agencies, from inside and outside Iraq.

Twenty four: financial procedures

24.1 The general management committee shall set up an annual budget for the financial year from 1 January to 31 December.

24.2 The general management committee shall set up the financial procedure for the association which shall determine the parameters for the expenditure and all aspects of the financial activities.

24.3 The account shall be audited by authorized auditor\.

25.1 The money raised by the association shall be deposited at recognized bank or banks in the name of the association. Withdrawal shall be by cheques signed by the treasurer and the secretary.

25.2 expenditure and deposits and withdrawals shall be recorded and verified by appropriate receipts.

Part four: temporary rules

Twenty six: due to the special conditions in Iraq, the following rules shall apply:

26.1 The headquarter of the association shall be in Damascus, Syria, until such time the association is able to operate from inside Iraq.

26.2 Subscription for membership to the association shall be determined by agreement between the general management committee and the branches.