

SPRESS CONFERENCE:

Dr. Tahseen al-Sheikhly, Civilian Spokesman, Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon

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REPORTERS 1-8

***REP1 = REPORTER 1**

***INT = INTERPRETER**

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

It's okay? As-Salāmu `Alaykum. [Continues speaking in Arabic.]

INT:

How are you doing? Frankly, today I'm going to have a very long presentation so that I'll make it brief...I'll make a brief statement. The operation of improving Baghdad City is a very vital issue for the Iraqi government.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in English.] I think there is problems with the voice for the cameraman. Okay? [Continues speaking in Arabic.]

INT:

The operation of developing Baghdad City is very important for the Iraqi government. And we have mentioned...earlier in a press conference we have mentioned some figures. And there...we said there are \$3 million...\$3 billion are allocated for the development of Baghdad City. Frankly speaking, these...this amount is a gift by the Iraqi government and our vision development Baghdad City. But in addition to that, we have a vision of investment and investment projects that can be conducted in Baghdad City. The work is ongoing and continuous in planning and implementing the projects that would develop Baghdad City. Our vision for Baghdad City as it is designed in a special way, and the plans...the original plans...the original plans for Baghdad City have been made for...25 years ago. And since the growing in population we have failed to keep in consideration a number of issues concerning the potable water and projects for sewage system and roads and bridges. Also, projects about parkings and green parks and the waste disposal. We have put descriptions...details for each of them within 2008 budget, and we have started with it already. And it's going to be end with the year 2010. I just tried to give you the details of the expenditure of the \$3 billion. This presentation is about the potable water for Baghdad City. On the year 2014, we're going to need this number, which is

4,500 liter a day. We're working on a few projects...related projects to the potable water pipelines in a way that would make us able to meet the needs within the timetable. This would be implemented through establishing the first phase of a Rusafa Project. Which is...according to which the funds that you see: 133 million Iraqi dinars for the year 2008, 2,060 million Iraqi dinars for the year 2010. These amounts have been allocated for the specified years. And eventually establishing four new projects: two in Rusafa to incur the capacity of 3,427,000 liter per day. It would cost 20 billion Iraqi dinar and to establish land tanks and to establish pipelines for potable water to houses. Also, crude water for the neighborhoods with the length of 2,000 meter...or we think there are some new and old waste sewage system...new and old sewer system that have been planned. Also, preparing pipelines within different sizes. All these would lead to the cost of 23...338 Iraqi billion dinars for 2008. These projects, including the water [unintelligible] of Rusafa, are going to provide Baghdad City with potable water 2,200 liter...billion liters Baghdad in the Rusafa sector. This sketch viewed at a high look; you see projects and the pipelines. Sixty percent of them...of the pipelines are working. And as far as the sewage system, Baghdad City is within 900 kilo-...square kilometers in area, so.... It is flat land. Since it is consisting of two parts, Rusafa and Karkh, the sewage system in Baghdad City is

within the percentage of 79%; 21% of the areas in Baghdad was not included in the sewage plans; 21% are non-served areas, we consider them unserved areas. We intend to establish sewage system there. These projects including the...is to establish a line from Habibiya Station for treating water. Eighty-nine is the.... To establish the main lines.... We have lots of figures that have been made for the sewage system. You see this plan, it would support the idea of the projects that can be executed in the sewage system. The Baghdad Municipality Projects Department made kept in consideration to take care of the roads and bridges system that would be implemented in Baghdad City during the three coming years with the amount of \$3 billion as to build factories that would provide [unintelligible]. To rehabilitate Balad area...that would provide Balad with primary elements. All the needed procedures, such as preparing the roads, picking up the waste, adding the covering layers, all these projects you would see they would cost 4 million Iraqi dinars and would reach 30 Iraqi millions. We have established projects with a cost of 267 billion Iraqi dinars to establish stations...to establish facilities that are dealing with the waste disposal, to burn and to collect the waste for the...this is the job of the Amanat Department, they specialize in this field. These are the topics we are going to deal with including this plan. We have a bridges and roads also. We have the bridge that for that

we're contracting on the Khatan Square near [unintelligible] area. It is very important for the traffic, because it would solve the traffic jams in Khatan Square. It would cost \$62 million. The plans are about to be submitted. We also have the bridge of Al-Mathafalawi[ph] area. This is very important to...for the traffic in the Al Al[ph] area. It would cost \$62.5 million. Also the bridge in the Khalafat[ph] Square in Bab al-Madam area due to the traffic jam of Bab al-Madam area to also cost about the same. All of them would cost \$79.5 million. Also, we have this bridge that would start from Al Hamadakassim[ph] Highway and would pass over Attar[ph] Square and Al Dilad[ph] Square and would...and add the other end of the highway. This is very important for the traffic jams and would connect other places such as [Unintelligible] Street with Al Kadhimiya area. We needed to buy some properties and lands in order to start the implementation of these projects. The bridge that would start...that would connect the squares of Samal[ph] and Addan, it is to solve the traffic jam in Karkh area. As you see, these are, infrastructures of projects in order to provide Baghdad with the ability to deal with the population crowd in the city. All the cost of these are going to be \$77.5 million. And the last year, according to the plan, the third year which is, we intend to build a bridge in Ghrat[ph] area of Rusafa and other one in Mosansariyasi[ph] Square with a cost of \$26 million. Also, plans to...for transportation

in Kadhimiya. Also to connect Al Sha'ab area with the highway, the Al Kanat[ph] Street, with a cost of \$448 million. These are the points we'd like to talk about. And also, in the fourth year of the project...of the plan, we have also other bridges in Jadriya [unintelligible] area, Kadhimiya area, Biya[ph], Martez[ph] Street with a cost of \$91 million in these areas. This, if we would look at all this, we would see this as a summary of all the costs as you may see. We have divided them into five categories. As for the water system, it would be 4,375 billion. Because you see, the following figures for the rest of services. All of them would cost, in total...all of them would cost 4 million 500.... All these projects are going to be implemented by the Iraqi government in Baghdad City. This is not all of it. As you see, we have a building of Baghdad City. This building involves us to call for the investors to invest in Baghdad City. That's why the vision of the Iraqi government was to prevent some few groups of the development plans through the investments. These projects would include the project of developing Haifa Street. This is the area we're suggesting to have the development. It would be building a compound—or three of them—inside the area. Each one of the buildings...the total of the compounds would be 292 flats. These buildings you see in Haifa Street, these compounds, the three of them, are going to be existed within this sector...section and now we're looking for the investments to be carried out in this area.

Also, we have a project to develop Al Holafat[ph] Street which is in the east side...the [unintelligible] side of Baghdad City. This development would involve establishing compounds with a number of 340 flats, also commercial trade center, within the area of 74,600 square meters. Another project which would extend the reach...start from Babashekh[ph] area, Al Kilani[ph] Square, so the highway area. It would include building a compound and a trade center, and all the accessories that would help this trade center. As you see, these are the suggested plans that we have submitted to the investors. We...the Iraqi government is looking to bring and attract the investors now. The suggestion you see, we're just waiting for the perfect and the suitable investment in order to undertake the development projects. As you see, the cost is \$172 million and 1,000.... This is to develop the area starting from Al-Jamariya[ph] Bridge and end at the Karrada area. We have started this project actually, but the [unintelligible] started working on it. And the other part, we are looking for investors in order to continue with that. This project.... As you see, these are the development we intend to establish there. We need to develop the riverbanks areas. Also, we need to use special kinds of trees. The area is 49,000 hectare we need to cover. Also, to organize the sides of the river and that would allow different activities there for people to practice. Also, Shahamar[ph], the industrial zone, we have also a plan to develop it

as you see. It is existed already as a city that provides spare parts for cars and car maintenance. But it is okay also to make some investment there for the industry sector. We have started to develop...some development, as you see in front of you, Shahamar[ph] area. We have placed several suggestions here in front of you which...it includes numbers of factories that would help the commercial operation for AI [unintelligible] manufacturing. As you see here also, the Rusafa area. We have intention to develop it as you see. This is...each part of these are a group of buildings. These...this is the design for the buildings as you see...yeah. This is another view for the buildings...the compounds, yes. The cost would be \$784 million for four years...divided into four years. Development of Kabulyas[ph] area in Kursat[ph]. This is the side which is on the...located on the river as you see. It is neglected as you see. We have the plans to establish first-class, five-stars hotel with 15 flights...floors in the area. Also, this would include...it would include 354 rooms and halls for meetings and conferences; all the accessories needed in hotels...high-class hotels. Also, by...on the two sides of the hotel we would like to have some shops there that would sell antiques and [unintelligible] objects. Also, at the same area, if you would notice with me, we have plans here to establish cafeterias, parks, also a boats area, an open cinema, cars parking, and admission to the shrine, the holy shrine southwest of

that area in order to revive the Al Karkh area. This...the cost would be \$93 million. This is another view...another...for the suggested design. We also have the project of establishing a hotel in Al Kimiya[ph] area. It would have ten floors; 20 billion Iraqi dinars is the cost. On the area of 11,000 meters...square meters. This is the hotel at Al Kamyia[ph] area which is located on the street...on Al Marheetz[ph] Street. This is another design that we wi-...intend to build this...establish this building in Mansour area. That's Al-Amira Street. The plans are ready and completed...and complete. These are different photos for the project. Also, at Al Rashid Camp, we have a vision to build a compound. We're going to use the area to build 135 flats there. We also intend to build a park in [unintelligible] area. Also, a park in Baghdad-Jadidah area with the area of 112,065 square meters. It would include fountains, a lake, and lots of facilities there. Also to improve Al Habibiya area in Sadr City with a cost of 2.2 Iraqi billion dinars. Also, another investment would include building a theater, a restaurant, aquarium...fish aquarium, a tower with a restaurant included in it, a basketball playground, Internet center – all...the complete package of the infrastructure. Also, Hay al-Adil in the Mansour area. Also, intend to have a project worth 10 billion dinars. It would include...this park...amusement park would include lots of facilities. The compounds which are included in our visions...we believe that there

should be some areas to help release the pressure on the...that would help the growing in population. The house projects we intend to establish in Al Ghazaliyah and [unintelligible] and Al Rashid area, these are just suggestions...suggested plans. We would hope for some investments in this field. Also, other project is to have a city for the international fairs and hotels in Amariyah area. We have made the plans and it will include a developed presentation hall, a restaurant, hotels, cinema, theater, halls for meetings, parking area, lakes, water surfaces, also other facilities for services. As you see, the plan is here before you. Also, there is a project to hold a cultural city in Latifalat[ph] Square, which is across from the Green Zone, which would include a cinema theater, celebrations hall. Also, a central library, a museum...a historical museum. Also, art center and facilities also. Facing a grass area, there is some area there between Kadhimiya and Gradz[ph]. It is like an island. We would like to develop it. We have a plan...a project to do it through establishing casinos, restaurants, halls for parties, boat area. And we would like to have a passage that would connect it with a grass area which is close to it. In Kadhimiya area there is also a project to develop the area of Al Kadhimiya in the suitable way. It would include...it is 50 hectares area. It would include a number of activities that would facilitate the religious tourism. Also, new buildings that would reflect the cultural and the modern nature. Also, to develop the

areas around the shrines, the holy shrines. As you see, this is the same area. This is the land for the same area. This is the area in which...it's going to be used for commercial activities and for hotels inside Kadhimiya area. This is a better view. You will see here, the middle is the shrine and around it is the project. We have the plans here to implement it. We would like the investment companies to answer our call and submit their offers. This is the projects in total that we're talking about today. The purpose behind this is to make you acknowledge with the nature of the vision of the Iraqi government in implementing such projects to develop Baghdad. It is impossible to develop Baghdad City [unintelligible] on the local locations. But we need to attract the investments also. The prime minister wishes to call the companies to invest in Iraq, especially in Baghdad City. Also, we have called Iraqi investors to invest in some of the projects, especially the projects that are dealing with parks – the easy projects, the direct projects. This plan is for three years. One year only for the purpose of...in case...for the prolonging...for the prolongation[sic] time. The infrastructure project that have...that we explained to you would cost \$3 billion for three years. But also, we kept in consideration the investment projects that are already existed, which I have explained would equal the value of this amount. We have also another plan that we are discussing the Council of Ministers with. It is the “10 to 10”

plan to develop a Al Kanatz[ph] Way in ten years with a cost of \$10 million. Next time, hopefully, we would explain them to you. Now, I may take your questions.

REP1: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Doctor, the plan for the infra-...the development of the infrastructure.... As far as the development of the infrastructure. All Iraqi companies are going to implement these projects? We would be pleased if the project of metro Baghdad would be included in these projects. The plan; is it only for three years, or is it an open time...an open dateline for these projects?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Firstly, this plan is for three years to...for the infrastructure for Baghdad. It's very important. Metro Baghdad is not within the infrastructure projects. It is within the [unintelligible] development projects. It is not included within this budget. This budget is allocated for the reconstruction of Baghdad City according to the capabilities...capacities of Baghdad and the amounts are going to be allocated by the government through the region's development or the governmental...central government allocations. By issuing the investments below and forming a body...a committee for the

investment, the Iraqi government have attract the effort of the international community to invest in Iraq in the way that would guarantee the rights for all sides. The investment law now would partner...would allow lots of facilitations through the investors. There are German companies, Gulf companies, but they have come forward and offered their investments. Just a few days ago, we have started the building of the Iraqi-German Hospital. This is one of the projects that are going to be built. There is more than 18 projects that are going to be implemented during the coming years. Our visions for the investment projects, it is not within a timetable. It is out of control now. We would like for the investor to come and would start working. We would give him three years. But we are implementing to use this plan...well, whether it was through the funding or through the way that would make Baghdad appear in its right way, especially that it's...there's lots of criminal activities that have made us lose lots of chances to start from...all over again. Yes, please.

REP2: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Doctor, you have mentioned in your statement that the urban projects that needs investment. Does the Iraqi conference allow the investment in Iraq?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

We have opened...established the High Commission for Investment. It is open for a number of countries. The contract, through holding conferences be...everybody is working towards the right direction. We have the donor company...countries conferences for the businessmen. Also, [unintelligible] conference. And we also have another conference for businessman, which is going to be held for businessmen. The aim is to attract the investors to work inside Iraq. Everybody is really serious about this. Yes, please.

REP3:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

My question has two parts. First, as you know, the budget of the Iraqi government had...have spare. And the budget is for three years...three billions. Don't you think for the urban development for Baghdad City it is very little? Can't we prolong the timetable? I mean, can we prolong the allocation of the money? The second question. You know there are other agencies that are working for development of Baghdad City as international organizations and friendly governments; also grants from Iran and Korea. You did not mention such things in your statement.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

Our vision is to develop Baghdad as an Iraqi government. We do not deny the efforts of the other sides that are helping us in rebuilding this country. As you see, our presentation was restricted to the plan of the Iraqi government and Baghdad municipality in particular. As you have seen, the \$3 billion is not enough, as you have said; it is right. But this is only for the infrastructure to rehabilitate Baghdad City to be ready in order for the urban development. We are working according to the Iraq policy for building the city. The country is not going to be built only within the local efforts. We need investors, international markets. This our...this is our prospective [unintelligible] are using. Part of the projects are...a part of the budget is not enough to develop one city of...the City of Iraq. We are working on finding a way to develop the cities of Iraq within a very short time through attracting investors. Yes, sir.

REP4:

[Asks question in Arabic.]

INT:

You have talked about the intentions and the visions. They were big dreams and wishes for Baghdad City. It does not involve only Iraqis of Baghdad City. It is for all Iraqis. You have talked about water...the potable water within a plan of three years for Baghdad municipality. You have talked about investing and the housing fields. What about the electricity? You have not mentioned the

electric power within these projects. Is it not possible...it is not possible to build such beautiful projects without electricity.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY:

[Speaks in Arabic.]

INT:

Yes. It's true. We're talking about a dream. It has always been a dream. These dreams...whenever there is a will – like your will, the wills of good people, the efforts of people who have worked on making these plans – they are able to make these dreams to come to reality. This is the Iraqi government vision with the Baghdad municipality. Baghdad municipality is not involved in electricity, as you see. But you're talking about the infrastructure, the basis, the foundations that are relevant to developing Baghdad City. As for the electric power, I will answer your question. There is a special plan to deal with power. We have a national crisis, not just on Baghdad. We are asked to elevate the production to the level that we need more than 10 mega...and the production would not exceed 5,000. We would hope to receive the minister of electricity and would...to explain it to you. We need ten years in order to alleviate with this. But there are other supporting projects that would help meet some of the need. But the projects of Ministry of Electric Power, hopefully it would be enough...the plan of the Ministry of Electric Power would be enough to cover the needs. I wouldn't talk

in place...in their place, but I wish if they were here and would talk about their efforts and their achievements. As you have seen, we supplant our dreams. These are just plans. But you see there is someone who would make plans and there is someone who would make the plans a reality.

REP5: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: I have two questions. First one. Did the government kept...keep in consideration to preserve the Baghdad heritage? Second question. You wish to accomplish such projects. Do you feel optimistic about the security stable...security stability?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: You know who have planted fear and terror in this country. They thought they would keep intimidating us. But as you see through the Fardh Al-Qanoon plan, we have uprooted their...those figures. As you have seen, we, with our brothers, were able to establish the basis...the security basis that are suitable to start with these projects. A year ago, we have talked about these projects, but we have...there was a will inside each Iraq and each individual Iraqi to develop Baghdad. We have talked about security first, then the construction. This is our plan. Your second question? Hopefully, during the

couple...coming...the next couple of weeks, we would...you would come to Al Mutanabi Street and see how did Baghdad...the government worked on preserving the heritage of Baghdad and the culture of figures there are well preserved on that street, as you see. And you would see the work is ongoing and continuous. We cannot ignore the cultural image of Baghdad. Baghdad reflects the heritage and the history. As you have seen, most of the designs of the hotels, all of them reflect one trend. How to reflect the Islamic heritage for the designs. Yes, please.

REP6: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: Doctor, we have not noticed any...within the plan the areas of Taji, Saba Al Bour, Al Nahrawan, Al Malal[ph]. They have not been included within your plan.

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: By the way, my last project was in Hizarak[ph] and Rusafa. Also, in Karkh we have other projects. But these compounds that we have presented to you, this plan was made for a group of projects that we had picked their locations. Later we're going to have a wide-scale plan. This is just the start. Hopefully later, we would cover all Baghdad City.

REP7: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: You have talked lately about building a [unintelligible] city in Sadr City. Is this going to...is the Iraqi companies are going to work on this?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Any side would properly establish the plans. The suggested plan is “10 to 10,” which is 10 billions for 10 years. It is not...it is just to help the population growth and to make everybody get the chance to find a place to live in. Especially this area in Baghdad is under pressure. What do you think...what.... The people living there, it is their right to live happily and find place to live. This is the plan of “10 to 10.” I told you, ten years. The timetable is ten years.

REP7: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: What do you mean by being conducted?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: We're waiting for the Council of Ministers to approve on it. As you know, it is the routine and the procedures. But the timetable is ten years. Yes?

REP8: [Asks question in Arabic.]

INT: You have mentioned...you have prepared the plan to develop Baghdad. But did you put a plan to get rid of some the dirt[sic] figures inside the governmental institutions?

DR AL-SHEIKHLY: [Speaks in Arabic.]

INT: Yes, we are facing, in this period, armed groups. We're...we have to develop our capabilities to fight everything as we have both the outlaws and al-Qaida, and we won. We have to win the rest of the battles. As you see, the Iraqi government is not incapable of making a plan. Well we have so many monitoring systems that are running after those corrupted. Thank you very much. I don't wish to prolong here because the hall is reserved for another conference. I'm thankful for you and for your attendance. I just wish for you to convey this picture to the citizens because they need to hear from you about the dreams, as you have said. But it would become a reality within a minute. Thank you very much.