



February 28, 2007

Dear Colleague:

The US Agency for International Development (USAID)-IZDIHAR project, in association with the USAID/Iraq Economic Governance II Program, is organizing the first Iraqi Banking and Finance Conference ***Banking in Iraq: The 21st Century Challenge***, to be held at the Intercontinental Hotel, Amman, Jordan from April 4-5, 2007.

At this event, participants will take stock of the developments in the Iraqi banking industry post April 2003, address issues facing the development of banking and explore the prospects and modalities of building a vibrant banking industry in Iraq. The summary of deliberations from the topical areas addressed at this conference will be compiled into a brief recommendations paper to be distributed to policy makers, donors, conference partners and interested parties.

Participating at this important conference will include representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Iraq, other Government of Iraq entities, regional regulators, Iraq private and state owned banks, regional and international banking groups, non-bank financial institutions, bank training organizations, international donors and selected international banking experts.

Please find attached an annotated agenda and a registration form. A detailed agenda will be provided upon acceptance of your participation. The due date for confirming your participation and sending the completed registration form is March 21, 2007. For information regarding this event, please contact Donal Cotter dcotter@izdihar-iraq.com (tel. #: 964-7901-942-312) who is the designated coordinator for this event.

We look forward to seeing you at the conference.

Sincerely,

Baljit Vohra
Chief of Party
IZDIHAR

A Note about IZDIHAR

IZDIHAR is a USAID-funded project implemented in Iraq since 2004 (www.izdihar-iraq.com). *Izdihar* is an Arabic word meaning "prosperity." IZDIHAR is a comprehensive project designed to assist the Government of Iraq expand the private sector and create jobs by developing a more market-friendly environment for economic growth, and to assist development of the Iraqi private sector itself. A critical element of this project is the IZDIHAR MSME Component which seeks to strengthen the Iraqi micro, small and medium enterprise sector through development of a sustainable bank lending and microfinance industry. IZDIHAR has supported the establishment of the first loan guarantee program in Iraq, "The Iraqi Company for Bank Guarantees Ltd." Training and technical assistance is being provided to private banks in helping them to implement progressive bank lending methodologies.

Funded by:



IZDIHAR is a joint venture of:
The Louis Berger Group, Inc.
The Services Group, Inc.