

Support Committee for Higher Education in Iraqi Kurdistan (Established in 1992)

In one of the meetings held by the Kurdish Scientific and Medical Association (KSMA) on 27th of July 1992, Dr Fouad Henari explained to the audience the requirements for establishing a committee in the UK to help higher education in Iraqi Kurdistan as the situation was critical. This was due to the sanctions imposed by Saddam's regime on Kurdistan. During that meeting the audience decided to form a team and a number of intellectuals agreed and nominated themselves to establish a committee. They were Dr Fouad Henari, Dr Dlawaer Ala'addin, Dr Sherzad Talabani, Dr Sabah Jassim, Mr Kassim Ala'addin, Ms Badria Najmaddin and myself.

We, as members of the committee, held a number of meetings. In the first one we decided to give the chairman's role to Dr Fouad Henari and named the committee 'Support Committee for the University of Salahaddin (SCUS)'. The reason we named it SCUS was that the University of Salahaddin (SU) was the only institution representing higher education in Iraqi Kurdistan. After the opening of Slemani and Duhok Universities our decision was to expand our support to them and consequently we had to change the name of our committee from SCUS to 'Support Committee for Higher Education in Iraqi Kurdistan' (SCHEIK).

Due to changes to circumstances Dr Ala'addin moved to Nottingham whilst Dr Talabani went to Libya and Mr Kassim Ala'addin who was the representative of the Kurdish Cultural Centre (KCC) retired, and Ms Najmaddin disappeared without notification. Dr Jassim who still to this present day lives in Oxfordshire stayed as an active member but his attendance to our meetings was limited.

Dr Henari personally asked me to act as SCHEIK's coordinator. I accepted the position and started to work voluntarily in the KCC fulltime for six months and part-time for a year. The first Kurdish organisation that offered their kind assistance was the KCC. They donated £3000 to SCHEIK and arranged an office for me with full office facilities of using fax, telephone and stationeries. During that time we contacted most universities in the UK, charity organisations, individual scientists, medical doctors and other distinguished people. Many people responded to our appeal as they started to donate money either in one full payment or by direct debit to SCHEIK's account. Charity organisations such as the KCC, International Book Aid (IBA), World University Service (WUS) and Christian Aid responded to our appeal. To this day we will not forget the bitter reply from the Muslim Aid when they told us that Kurdistan is outside their charity's zone.

We did not give up but we needed someone to join our committee. Mr Mohammed Khailani kindly joined us and took the responsibility of collecting books from the IBA warehouse in Brixton, London and transporting them to other warehouses ready for Shipment to Kurdistan.

We as SCHEIK managed to send more than 35 tones of books and journals to the three universities. We sent \$30,000 in cash and were fairly distributed between them. Computers, laboratory equipment, teaching aid were among our shipments to Kurdistan.

Apart from teamwork Dr Henari individually used his initiative and contacted many hospitals and managed to obtain a lot of medical equipment, most of it were sent to the Al-ta'limi hospital in Sulaimania. Dr Ala'addin wrote an article about higher education in Iraqi Kurdistan in the Guardian newspaper. WUS interviewed me and they published an article in their news bulletin. The BBC interviewed me and they broadcasted the interview on BBC world service. When I was in Kurdistan in 1993, I appeared on both

local TV stations for the PUK and KDP, introducing SCHEIK to the people of Kurdistan. I also wrote an article in 1997 about the activities of SCHEIK in "Peyam", a Kurdish newspaper issued in London.

As well as a number of Members of Parliament, Dr Henari and I met Prince Philip, the Queen's husband, in a reception arranged by the IBA. After our introduction he simply said, "Why you don't go back to your country". We disregarded his comment and continued with our commitment.

One of the most important achievements of the SCHEIK was the recognition of the three universities by the International Association of Universities (IAU) based in Paris. Another big achievement was the recognition of medical graduates of the three universities by the General Medical Council of the UK. The later was achieved merely by Dr Henari's effort. He also introduced the plan to use some of SCHEIK's money to help young Kurdish doctors who could not afford paying for their PLAB test. More than thirty doctors successfully benefited from this scheme and the majority of them paid back the loan.

Dr Henari was in continuous contact with the heads of the three universities as well as the deans of the medical schools. The SCHEIK in liaison with a number of Kurdish medical consultants in the UK managed to send external examiners free of charge for many years to examine the final-year students of the three medical schools. This arrangement is still going on.

During the last three years Dr Henari would occasionally mention that his intentions would be to retire from his position as the chairman of the committee. My personal advice was to reconsider this decision due to the hard effort he successfully put in and without him many things would not have been achieved.

In a meeting on Saturday 10th of March 2007 the Support Committee for Higher Education in Iraqi Kurdistan met a number of doctors, scientists and intellectuals in the Kurdistan hall of KCC. During the meeting, the following topics were discussed in detail:

- The past activities of SCHEIK and it's valued achievements
- Financial report
- Relation of SCHEIK with other scientific and medical organisations in the UK
- Future of SCHEIK
- The departure of Dr Fouad Henari
- Formation of a new Committee

Although many attendees tried to convince Henari to stay, his decision was final and later his departure was received by a round of applause, which reflected his hard work and valuable achievements during his post as SCHEIK's chairman.

Later the attendees decided that SCHEIK must continue and to form a new committee. Five members were selected without a vote, they are: Dr. Firyad Hawezi, Dr. Sherwan Kafoor, Dr. Haemin Al-Mufti, Dr. Barzan Izzat Najeeb and Mr. Mohammed Khailani. The attendees and the new committee members appointed Sherwan Kafoor as the new chairman of SCHEIK.

In a short speech Kafoor promised that SCHEIK would continue independently and would benefit from Henari's legacy. A new strategy will be formed, compatible with the current situation in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Dr. Sherwan Kafoor
14/03/2007

In one of the meetings held by the Kurdish Scientific and Medical Association (KSMA) on 27th of July 1992, Dr Fouad Henari explained to the audience the requirements for establishing a committee in the UK to help higher education in Iraqi Kurdistan as the situation was critical. This was due to the sanctions imposed by Saddam's regime on Kurdistan. During that meeting the audience decided to form a team and a number of intellectuals agreed and nominated themselves to establish a committee. They were Dr Fouad Henari, Dr Dlawaer Ala'addin, Dr Sherzad Talabani, Dr Sabah Jassim, Mr Kassim Ala'addin, Ms Badria Najmaddin and myself.

We as the committee, held a number of meetings. In the first one we decided to give the chairman's role to Dr Fouad Henari and named the committee 'Support Committee for the University of Salahaddin (SCUS)'. The reason we named it SCUS was that the University of Salahaddin (SU) was the only institution representing higher education in Iraqi Kurdistan. After the opening of Slemani and Duhok Universities our decision was to expand our support to them and consequently we had to change the name of our committee from SCUS to 'Support Committee for Higher Education in Iraqi Kurdistan' (SCHEIK).

Due to changes to circumstances Dr Ala'addin moved to Nottingham whilst Dr Talabani went to Libya and Mr Kassim Ala'addin who was

As well as a number of Members of Parliament, Dr Henari and I met Prince Philip, the Queen's husband, in a reception arranged by the IBA. After our introduction he simply said, "Why you don't go back to your country". We disregarded his comment and continued with our commitment.

One of the most important achievements of the SCHEIK was the recognition of the three universities by the International Association of Universities (IAU) based in Paris. Another big achievement was the recognition of medical graduates of the three universities by the General Medical Council of the UK. The later was achieved merely by Dr Henari's effort. He also introduced the plan to use some of SCHEIK's money to help young Kurdish doctors who could not afford paying for their PLAB test. More than thirty doctors successfully benefited from this scheme and the majority of them paid back the loan.

Dr Henari was in continuous contact with the heads of the three universities as well as the deans of the medical schools. The SCHEIK in liaison with a number of Kurdish medical consultants in the UK managed to send external examiners free of charge for many years to examine the final-year students of the three medical schools. This arrangement is still going on.

During the last three years Dr Henari would occasionally mention that his intentions would be to retire from his position as the chairman of the committee. My personal advice was to reconsider this decision due to the hard effort he successfully put in and

the representative of the Kurdish Cultural Centre (KCC) retired, and Ms Najmaddin disappeared without notification. Dr Jassim who still to this present day lives in Oxfordshire stayed as an active member but his attendance to our meetings was limited.

Dr Henari personally asked me to act as SCHEIK's coordinator. I accepted the position and started to work voluntarily in the KCC fulltime for six months and part-time for a year. The first Kurdish organisation that offered their kind assistance was the KCC. They donated £3000 to SCHEIK and arranged an office for me with full office facilities of using fax, telephone and stationeries. During that time we contacted most universities in the UK, charity organisations, individual scientists, medical doctors and other distinguished people. Many people responded to our appeal as they started to donate money either in one full payment or by direct debit to SCHEIK's account. Charity organisations such as the KCC, International Book Aid (IBA), World University Service (WUS) and Christian Aid responded to our appeal. To this day we will not forget the bitter reply from the Muslim Aid when they told us that Kurdistan is outside their charity's zone.

We did not give up but we needed someone to join our committee. Mr Mohammed Khailani kindly joined us and took the responsibility of collecting books from the IBA warehouse in Brixton, London and transporting

without him many things would not have been achieved.

In a meeting on Saturday 10th of March 2007 the Support Committee for Higher Education in Iraqi Kurdistan met a number of doctors, scientists and intellectuals in the Kurdistan hall of KCC. During the meeting, the following topics were discussed in detail:

- The past activities of SCHEIK and it's valued achievements
- Financial report
- Relation of SCHEIK with other scientific and medical organisations in the UK
- Future of SCHEIK
- The departure of Dr Fouad Henari
- Formation of a new Committee

Although many attendees tried to convince Henari to stay, his decision was final and later his departure was received by a round of applause, which reflected his hard work and valuable achievements during his post as SCHEIK's chairman.

Later the attendees decided that SCHEIK must continue and to form a new committee. Five members were selected without a vote, they are: Dr. Firyad Hawezi, Dr. Sherwan Kafoor, Dr. Haemin Al-Mufti, Dr. Barzan Izzat Najeeb and Mr. Mohammed Khailani. The attendees and the new committee members appointed Sherwan Kafoor as the new chairman of SCHEIK.

In a short speech Kafoor promised that SCHEIK would continue independently and would benefit from

them to other warehouses ready for Shipment to Kurdistan.

We as SCHEIK managed to send more than 35 tones of books and journals to the three universities. We sent \$30,000 in cash and were fairly distributed between them. Computers, laboratory equipment, teaching aid were among our shipments to Kurdistan.

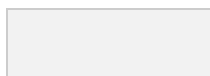
Apart from teamwork Dr Henari individually used his initiative and contacted many hospitals and managed to obtain a lot of medical equipment, most of it were sent to the Al-ta'limi hospital in Sulaimania. Dr Ala'addin wrote an article about higher education in Iraqi Kurdistan in the Guardian newspaper. WUS interviewed me and they published an article in their news bulletin. The BBC interviewed me and they broadcasted the interview on BBC world service. When I was in Kurdistan in 1993, I appeared on both local TV stations for the PUK and KDP, introducing SCHEIK to the people of Kurdistan. I also wrote an article in 1997 about the activities of SCHEIK in "Peyam", a Kurdish newspaper issued in London.

Henari's legacy. A new strategy will be formed, compatible with the current situation in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Sherwan Kafoor

14/03/2007

[Medical Examiners Report, Click for more detail](#)



Editorial Board

The editorial board of the “Kurdish Scientist” are confident that this website with the help of those who cordially are determined to convene the scientific growth in Kurdistan would reach its objectives within few months of its launch.

Improving science in Iraqi Kurdistan requires efforts from scientist, intellectuals and experts inside or outside the region. Too many intellectuals who live abroad are positive to dedicate some of their expertise to people in Kurdistan, therefore we believe that this website is the answer to meet this criterion.

The editorial board would like to ask academics to send their publications, articles, projects and essays in their fields of interest to the [kurdishscientist](#) archive for future references and benefit of Kurdish students.