



Office of the Resident Coordinator  
in the State of Kuwait

مكتب المنسق المقيم  
في دولة الكويت

**Humanitarian Reporting Workshop for Media representatives in Kuwait  
Introductory Remarks by Mrs. Valerie Cliff, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Kuwait  
2 November 2008**

Good morning and welcome everyone.

We are so glad to have all of you here with us today. Usually when we see you at our events, you are there to help us as reporters and journalists, but today's event is different – today's event is FOR you. We are very pleased to have many colleagues from various United Nations Organizations who have come to Kuwait just to work with you over the next two days to discuss issues pertaining to reporting on humanitarian issues, understanding the various resources that are out there for you to use to find out information on humanitarian situations throughout the world. For example, DRC – Democratic Republic of Congo – huge displacement of people in eastern part of the country – so if you wanted to report on the latest on that – where would you go to research that situation? – where would you look for accurate information about the number of people displaced, what help they need, what situation they are in, etc.

We have with us colleagues from IRIN (the Integrated Regional Information Networks) of OCHA – Office of coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (you may remember that Sir John Holmes – the Head of OCHA was here in Kuwait earlier this year). We also have colleagues from UNICEF – the United Nations Children's Fund And from UNHCR – the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

So really you are very lucky that you will be hearing from all of these representatives who are really experts on humanitarian issues and I hope you benefit a lot from listening to them and discussing with them.

The media in Kuwait play a very important role . In the Arab World, I would say that Kuwait perhaps provides the most open and free public space for media. – We see so many news organizations operating in Kuwait which is great – and one of the reasons we wanted to bring this very unique training opportunity here to Kuwait over the next two days.

As the United Nations, we of course, need your help and we rely on the media to get our messages out there and to make sure people know what we do. We sometimes face an image problem, particularly in the Arab World – where people think of the United Nations – only in terms of the political role or the UN – whether or not peace has been secured for all parts of the region – and we know that regrettably that hasn't been achieved yet – so some may be frustrated and think the UN is not succeeding. Of course, we also have great achievements in the humanitarian and development fields – and that is what we would like to be able to get the Arab world to know about – is the totality of the role of the United Nations and what we do.

Please give your attention to these UN colleagues who are here over the next two days – I think you will learn a lot from them .