



**UK CHARITY GIVES GROUND BREAKING
MEDICAL HELP TO KURDISTAN**

www.swinfencharitabletrust.com



London, Monday 20 June 2005 (KRG/KDC) - A British charity that offers groundbreaking medical assistance in 19 countries is using the internet to help doctors in Kurdistan to diagnose patients and recommend treatments.

The Swinfen Charitable Trust is assisting doctors in Kurdistan by setting up email "store and forward" telemedicine links between hospitals in the region and medical experts worldwide. The medical specialists are leaders in their field and offer expert opinion and free advice in over 70 specialties and sub-specialties.

In June 2005 the Trust donated sets of equipment to medical centres at Suleimaniyah and Halabja; centres in Erbil and Dohuk already have operational units donated by the Trust. Since March 2004 a total of 19 hospitals in Iraq have been equipped, including centres in Al-Hilla, Baghdad, Basrah, Fallujah, Kirkuk, Maysan, Mosul and Tikrit. The Trust has plans to equip three more centres in Iraq.

Dr Delshad Meran of the Kurdistan Medical Association (KMA) co-ordinated the delivery and training of staff at the medical centre in Suleimaniyah. Dr Meran reports that "Both doctors and patients at the centre will greatly benefit from amazing image link-ups and the resulting advice that is emailed back from international medical experts. This gift to Kurdistan is improving medical skills and saving lives."

Lord and Lady Swinfen set up the Swinfen Charitable Trust in 1998, with the aim of assisting poor, sick and disabled people in the developing world. The Trust's policy is to do this by establishing telemedicine links between hospitals in the developing world and medical specialists who generously give free advice by e-mail.

Lord and Lady Swinfen believe that patient benefit and medical education is already well demonstrated, "From the emails received from doctors in Kurdistan we know that lives have been saved. Feedback from the doctors at the various hospitals in Kurdistan is positive and friendly working relationships have been established. The doctors in the region are very good at keeping in touch and we feel that the Telemedicine links are really appreciated."

At a reception earlier this year Ms Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman, Kurdistan Regional Government High Representative to the UK, had the chance to officially thank Lord and Lady Swinfen and the Trust on behalf of the Kurdish people.

If you would like to assist the work of the Swinfen Charitable Trust, there are various ways you can help. If you are a medical practitioner (consultant grade or equivalent), who wishes to donate your time and experience or you wish to make a donation please go to www.swinfencharitabletrust.com