

## **Sayyid Ammar al-Hakim: Babylon is the Cornerstone of the New Iraqi Project.. And the Citizen Alliance is Launching the "Babylon, the Past, the National Unity"**



During a public gathering held by the Citizen Alliance 411 in Babylon province on Wednesday, April 10, 2013, Sayyid Ammar al-Hakim, head of the Islamic Supreme Council of Iraq, said, Babylon is the cornerstone of the New Iraqi Project and a peaceful coexistence among its people will have favorable effects on every part of Iraq. In order to put an end to terrorism all around Iraq, he said, the terrorist cells in Babylon must be eliminated. "Only by preserving Babylon's history, the history of this country would be maintained in safety." Babylon needs plans to be drawn up and a will to carry out those plans, he continued. "The proud Babylon, with its people and noble tribes, can definitely progress towards a bright future. But to do so, it needs a vision, a plan and a real will to act". Thus he announced the "Babylon, the Past, the National Unity" project launched by the Citizen Alliance. Babylon is the symbol of the national unity given its geographic outreach to the north which is connected to the South of Baghdad, he uttered. "And the security and stability of these regions will serve as an example for the rest of Iraqi provinces."

Babylon, the pillar of Baghdad and the heart of Iraq, and "Babylon the Past, the National Unity" is made especially for it

His Eminence described Babylon province as the gate of the Middle Euphrates, the pillar of Baghdad and the heart of Iraq, and when developed, its present would be as shiny as its past used to be. He noted that the projects conceived by the Citizen Alliance requires concerted efforts between the local government, the federal government and the parliament, stressing the need for functional and serious measures to be taken by all parties so that the provinces can achieve the objectives of the projects launched by the Citizen Alliance. Here he elaborated on the "Babylon, the Past, the National Unity" project which has many features including: allocating, in addition to its predestined budget, an annual budget of USD 350,000,000 for Babylon for 7 years; establishing Hammurabi Center for historical studies on Babylon civilization and heritage; developing the archeological infrastructure of the province; rehabilitating its monuments conforming to international standards to turn it into a world touristic site; multiplying the number of research and excavation teams using world expertise in this domain as well as setting up the necessary facilities to attract tourists from all over the world which would introduce them to the civilizations of the ancient Iraq and generate big revenues for the province. As for the scientific field, the project envisions the development of the University of Babylon and advancement of the scientific and agricultural specialties as well as the archeological and historical studies. It also consists of building the new city of Hillah by putting into effect the resolution passed by the Council of Ministers in this matter; establishing the Shura Council of North Babylon Thinkers the mission of which would be to

settle the tribal clashes in North Babylon, and providing financial and moral support in order for its mission to bear fruit and to be a role model for the rest of the Iraqi provinces.

Establishing the World Museum of Babylon is part of the project

Concerning the development of touristic infrastructure, his Eminence confirmed that the establishment of the world Museum of Babylon is part of this project. The museum would be the greatest in the world that encompasses Babylonian ruins especially that most of the Babylonian archeological locations are yet to be discovered. In addition, the project includes the rehabilitation of the Alexandrian industrial facilities - particularly in the automobile, tractors and silky texture industry- which provide job opportunities for the laborers available in the province and who are considered among the best skilled laborers. The project also envisions the rehabilitation of Al Musayyib project so that it can be again the greatest agricultural edifice as previously planned. Moreover, residential compounds will be built for the families who live randomly nearby the project site, and roads and transportation will be expanded as highways around the city of Hillah will be set to facilitate transportation across the area from the north and west of the country to Middle Euphrates and from the south of the country as well. Plus, infrastructure will be developed in the village and different parts of Babylon. Farmers will be supported and educational and health associations will be expanded.

At the investment level, "Babylon, the Past, the National Unity" aims at encouraging the local and global touristic, economic and industrial investments in Hillah for the purpose of activating capitals and the employment of laborers. A commission will be formed to protect and develop the worshipping holy places of other religions in order for their followers to pay visits whether in Al Kafil shrine or others. "We are not against any religion and our message is to spread peace as our religion is a religion of peace", his Eminence said, adding "we are only against racism, against accusing others of apostasy and against disrespecting others rights. We are against those assaulters and holders of these poisoned thoughts regardless of the religion they follow". Moreover, the International Babylonian Commission for promotion of tourism will be established to introduce the city to the world, support the Babylon Cultural Festival, and develop its cultural and artistic activities. Jibla Center will also be established to support agricultural and zoological projects. And at last, the Euphrates Residential Project "Arous Al Fourat" with a capacity of 100 thousand residential units will be built to solve the housing problem in the province.

Martyr of the Niche movement has not changed; rather it has developed its potentials and mechanisms

His Eminence stressed that the Martyr of the Niche movement has not changed, rather it has developed its potentials and mechanisms, and that it is now responsible for its candidates and

will closely watch them and take strict measures against them whenever they fail to perform their duties, since they are well aware of the huge responsibility that weighs upon them. Al-Hakim said that no one will be treated softly or be allowed to exploit the name, history and blood of Martyr of the Niche movement, stressing that the time of absolute confidence has gone and that confidence today is measured by the achievements made, the reputation earned among people, and how close the candidate is to the audience. He also added that the Martyr of the Niche movement has a project in mind, and only individuals with real projects in mind would admit their mistakes, and apologize without justification. His Eminence reiterated that the Martyr of the Niche movement is not seeking after power, yet Allah endowed him with something even much important: the love of people, which is more precious and higher than any office that might be held, noting that serving the great Iraqi people is an honor to him.

Babylon, the city of resistance against injustice and tyranny

Sayyid al-Hakim said Babylon is the jewel of the Euphrates, and its noble tribes from north to south have made many martyrs, confirming that it fought against injustice and tyranny, and is a glorious city that produced prominent figures such as the Mujtahid Al Muhaqqiq al-Hilli and Ibn Idris. His Eminence described Hillah as a great city made by history and geography. "Its cultural heritage dates from the great Babylonian civilization featuring the Hanging Gardens and Hammurabi obelisk that the original Babylonians used to make the first human law which organized the civil affairs, and there the city of Hillah was born." His Eminence noted that Hillah embraced the Hawza Ilmiya during the rule of the Abbasids, and gave birth to many clerics during the reign of the Ottoman Empire. It was also the mouthpiece of rebels in the era of the British occupation, he said. And it was the first city to introduce urbanism as a way of life. In fact, Hillah sums up the history of the whole word. According to Sayyid al-Hakim, Hillah unfortunately seems in a miserable condition today despite its great potentials since it suffers from lack of services, desertification and unemployment. However, "Hillah is the gate of the Middle Euphrates and the pillar of Baghdad, and what makes it even more important is the multi-denominational noble Iraqi tribes living there", he concluded.