



Statement by Mr. Suleiman J. Al –Herbish, Director-General of OFID
On the Occasion of the Opening Ceremony for the Children’s Home in Kiev,
Ukraine
May 6, 2010

Your Eminence Bishop Stanislaw Shyrokoradiuk;
Father Viktor Simon;
Ms. Pascale Vayer;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies & Gentlemen:

I am honored and pleased to attend this very special opening ceremony for the newly built children’s home in Kiev. Indeed I thank you, Your Eminence, for the kind invitation and the generous hospitality we have received from your colleagues since our arrival yesterday.

On behalf of the family of OFID – the OPEC Fund for International Development – we are proud to have supported the construction of this children’s home for Ukrainian orphans. This home will help orphaned children to obtain access to medical, social, and educational assistance. In addition, it will also help to build the self-reliance of these children as well as create a sense of security and belonging – which is a basic right for any individual. The Former Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, once said, “*All children, no matter where they live, have the right to education and a safe and secure environment to grow*”¹. This statement is at the core of our activities. At OFID, our projects aim to foster social and economic progress in the developing world through; public sector loans for development projects; trade financing; support to private enterprises; as well as our grants program - a successful example of which is the construction of this Children’s Home. As part of this program we also extend an *Annual Award for Development*, which, in 2007, was given to the SOS Children’s Village, in recognition of their work with orphaned and abandoned children in the developing world.

¹ Quote taken from *World AIDS Orphan Day*, 2007 (May 7th) http://www.fxb.org/_library/docs/PressKit_ENG.pdf



Providing people with similar opportunities lies at the heart of OFID's mandate. For over 34 years, OFID has been working to improve the lives of children and families to help them meet their basic needs; whether it is in the areas of health, education, agriculture, transportation or energy.

Earlier this year, the Ukraine benefitted from a regional grant, approved by OFID, for an amount of US\$ 3 million for the joint *OFID/UNODC Initiative for HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care of Vulnerable people in Central Asia*. On a national level, our support to this orphanage home in Ukraine is the first operation that OFID has financed in this country; and we hope to be more involved in similar projects in the future.

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies & Gentlemen:

Finally, I want to commend the resilience and hard work of all the people involved in this project. Despite the setback that was faced in January 2009, when a big gas explosion caused serious damage to this *Orphanage Home*, you have managed to overcome all obstacles and turn this home into a reality – one that will improve the lives of many children for years to come.

Thank you very much!