HE Ihsan Abduljabbar Ismaeel
Minister of Oil
Ministry of Oil
Baghdad, Iraq

Your Excellency,

I am writing to extend the heartfelt condolences of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) on the loss of life following a fire at the Imam Hussein Teaching Hospital in the city of Nasiriya. That this heartbreaking tragedy occurs within three months of the fire at the Ibn al-Khatib hospital in Baghdad and in the midst of the global health pandemic heightens our grief and intensifies our mourning. We will keep the victims, the Government and the heroic people of Iraq in our thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

It is challenging to find the appropriate words that convey our sadness given that the majority of victims of this fire were patients being treated for COVID-19, their families caring for them, health care workers or those who were participating in the rescue efforts. We pray that those who mourn will be comforted and that those who are injured, recover quickly.

Once again, at a moment of tragedy, we have also seen acts of tremendous courage, good neighborliness and community spirit from the people of Iraq as volunteers bravely rushed to help with the rescue mission. The doctors and nurses treating the sick and the firefighters combatting the flames are heroes who deserve our respect. These events have typified the resilience, courage and kindness that are hallmarks of the Iraqi character.

In this hour of mourning, OPEC once again, stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the people of Iraq. We are proud that your great country is one of our Founder Members, the birthplace of our Organization and we remain indebted for the extensive and unique contribution Iraq has made to OPEC’s successes over the last 61 years. We pray that Almighty Allah gives you the fortitude to bear this terrible loss and will work closely with you, as the community of nations rally together to overcome the worst impacts of this dreadful COVID-19 pandemic.

Please accept, Excellency, assurances of my highest consideration and respect.

Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo
Secretary General