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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

Maurice Vellacott, MP
Saskatoon-Wanuskewin

Vellacott in the House of Commons speaks out on behalf of persecuted Christians in Iraq in aftermath of Archbishop Rahho's murder there

For Immediate Release

March 14, 2008

OTTAWA – Conservative MP Maurice Vellacott (Saskatoon-Wanuskewin) today in the House of Commons condemned the killing of Chaldean Catholic Archbishop, Mar Paulos Faraj Rahho. He said:

Mr. Speaker, yesterday morning, the body of Mar Paulos Faraj Rahho, Chaldean Catholic Archbishop of Mosel, was found riddled with bullets in Northern Iraq. He was kidnapped in late February as he left church.

The death of Archbishop Rahho is a tragedy that illustrates the difficulties faced by Iraq's Christian population. This gruesome murder is just one example of the tragic persecution faced by Iraqi Christians and I would like to take this opportunity to draw the House's attention to the community's struggles.

Iraq's Christian population is dwindling in size because of this new wave of violence levelled against them. This community constitutes only a small fraction of Iraq's predominantly Muslim population. They are one of the oldest communities in Iraq, being distinguishable by their Christian religion, unique culture, and Aramaic language, which was spoken at the time of Christ. Mr. Speaker, our government sends condolences to the Chaldean community and all the Christians of Iraq who suffer persecution.

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For further comment, call (613) 992-1966 or 297-2249