BRITISH INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF IRAQ

THE BRITISH MUSEUM

Lecture by Dr Saad Eskander
‘The Iraq National Library and Archive at a time of National Crisis: Difficult Choices and Unanticipated Challenges’

in aid of the BISI Appeal to bring Iraqi scholars to the UK
Thursday 4 February 2010 at 6.30 p.m.
BP Lecture Theatre, The British Museum

Dr Saad Eskander, director of the Iraq National Library and Archive (INLA), will cover several issues in his talk, including the political and ideological role the INLA played under the former dictatorial regime, the imposition of censorship system, the role that libraries, archives and museum can play at a time of a national crisis (post April 2003), and the INLA's current resistance to the imposition of any form of cultural censorship by the present government.

He was born in Baghdad, joined the Kurdish Peshmerga in 1981 and lived in the mountains of Iraqi Kurdistan for four years, then moved to Iran and Syria. He sought asylum in UK in 1990. He received his B.A. in modern history from the University of North London and his PhD in international relations and history from the London School of Economics. He returned to Iraq in 2003 after the invasion and since then has served as the director of the Iraq National Library and Archive. During the height of civil war in Iraq, he wrote a blog diary about the horrowing experience of living in Baghdad, which was subsequently published on the British Library's website and his diary caught the public imagination. It provided a vivid and powerful account of professional and academic life unthinkable to most users of the British Library – an institution very familiar to Dr Eskander while he was researching his PhD. He was awarded *Archivist of the Year Award* by New York's Scone Foundation at a ceremony at Columbia University in New York on 12 November 2007. He also won the *MESA Academic Freedom Award* of the Middle East Studies Association in 2007. He was awarded Honorary Fellowship of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in recognition of his distinguished service at a ceremony hosted at the British Library (http://www.bl.uk/iraqdiary/cilip.html) in December 2008

The ticket cost is £10. For BM Friends, Concessions and BISI members tickets cost £7.50. (First come first served basis.) Tickets will be sent to the address provided. Please send your reply form by Monday, 29 January 2010 to:
BISI/Dr Eskander Appeal Talk, 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH, UK**.**
For further information please contact: Joan Porter MacIver, BISI Administrator at e-mail: bisi@britac.ac.uk (preferred) or tel. 020 7969 5274
British Institute for the Study of Iraq (Gertrude Bell Memorial) www.britac.ac.uk/institutes/iraq

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Reply form for the BISI Appeal Lecture by Dr Saad Eskander 4 February 2010 at the British Museum

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