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MST 4/5/2J

17 March 2005

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PETRAEUS PLAN UPDATE

Your note of 14 March 2005, asked for an update on progress against the Petraeus Plan.

Development of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) remains largely on track, meeting the demands of a well-entrenched counter insurgency campaign and the evolving expectations of the Iraqi leadership. The Petraeus Plan aims to deliver a total of 280,000 security force personnel, configured, trained and equipped to maintain domestic stability and contribute to wider regional security. From January 2006 the ISF should be approaching full strength and the transfer of regional control will be underway. Over the next six months of 2006, the generation of ISF units should complete, the Multi National Force (MNF) training and mentoring commitment is expected to reduce, and in all but the most volatile provinces, Iraqi-led security operations should become the norm.

Ministry of Interior (MOI) Forces.

Trained and equipped MOI forces currently number almost 82,000 personnel, but this includes a large numbers of absentees due to intimidation, injury, and corruption, varying dramatically in proportion across the country. When MOI forces reach full strength in August 2006, their numbers will total almost 180,000. The largest component (135,000) will be Iraqi Police Service (IPS), which remains an area for improvement. Conceived for peace time constabulary duties, the rate of IPS development continues to lag, as standards of equipment, personnel and training are reviewed to answer the demands of the insurgency.

David Quarrey  
No 10 Downing Street

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Key concerns regarding MOI forces include poor leadership, absenteeism, corruption, politicisation and the urgent need for an Iraqi national policing strategy, supported by an appropriate training syllabus. Police equipment shortfalls are being addressed, but only further investment in training will deliver the leadership and technical capabilities fundamental to effective policing. The quality of leadership, in particular, has proved fundamental in tackling absenteeism and intimidation. The UK continues to support police training in Southern Iraq and Jordan, but there is scope to influence the development of national policing strategy in Baghdad, and to encourage greater international participation in the IPS training effort.

The Department for Border Enforcement (DBE) has been augmented by Special Border Force Battalions, created to enhance capability and successfully employed at key border crossings. The Special Police Commando and Public Order Battalions reach full strength in May 2005 and continue to perform well. Recent successes for MOI forces include a major Iraqi-led counter-insurgency operation in Samarra, seizing over 50 insurgents and a sizeable weapons cache. Elsewhere, the MOI is using its deployable units to reinforce the IPS and relieve pressure on coalition assets in areas such as Baghdad and Mosul.

#### Ministry of Defence (MOD) Forces.

Trained and equipped MOD forces total more than 60,000 personnel. Force generation is expected to complete in November 2005, reaching an establishment of over 100,000. The MNF emphasis is shifting accordingly. MNF-I plan to have Military Transition Teams (MTT) established across Iraq and working with Iraqi units by June. In MND(SE) we expect to have MTTs established by May. The MTTs will train and mentor their affiliated Iraqi units, remaining with them both in barracks and on security duties. In MND(SE) the MTT organisation will be developed from the existing partnership arrangements between coalition and ISF units, which first highlighted the benefits of this approach.

The development of MOD forces is progressing to plan and questions raised over the effectiveness of the Iraqi Army, have since been answered in a succession of successful counter insurgency actions. The Army, which now incorporates the National Guard and Intervention Force, will be at full strength by April 2005, with the Mechanised Brigade fully established by July 05. The supporting units, including logistics and training functions, will be formed in the same timescale but will continue to draw on MNF resources, as the ISF develops much needed expertise in these fields. Short Term Training Teams (STTs) will be formed to address these key capability gaps, also targeting command and control, communications, joint planning and intelligence. Development of the Navy and Air Force continues to plan, but is far removed from the MNF main effort of containing the insurgency.

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I am copying this letter to Irfan Siddiq (FCO), Moazzam Malik (DFID),  
(Cabinet Office), and PS/ 'C'.

M P NAWORYNSKY  
Private Secretary

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