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cc: PS
• PS/PUS

• ~~William W. H. H. H.~~ W. W. H. H. H.

• Edward Clapham

• H. H. H. H.

• UNIS

• Seb's

From the Private Secretary

17/x

Copy to H. H. H.

17 October 2002

Michael Wood

Dear Mark,

IRAQ: UN ROUTE

17/x

The Prime Minister discussed Iraq with the Foreign and Defence Secretaries and CDS on 17 October. Jonathan Powell, Sally Morgan, Alastair Campbell, David Manning and I were also present. This letter is sensitive. It must be seen only by those with a real need to know its contents, and must not be copied further.

The Foreign Secretary briefed the Prime Minister on his contacts with Powell and Villepin, and on the latest moves in New York.

The meeting concluded that the only way to keep the US on the UN route was for there to be a clear understanding that if Blix reported an Iraqi breach of the first Resolution then Saddam would not have a second chance. In other words, if for some reason (such as a French or Russian veto) there were no second Resolution agreed in those circumstances, we and the US would take action. At the time the first Resolution was passed, we should make three public points:

- (a) When the inspectors returned, Iraq's obligation was not only to cooperate with them on access to sites etc, but also to provide accurate and full information about Iraqi WMD.
- (b) If Iraq breached this Resolution, action would follow.
- (c) In the meantime, we could not assume a peaceful solution to the problem of Iraq's WMD, so we would outline the military preparations we were making. (It was important to do this only once the Resolution was passed, and not before.)

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I am copying this to Peter Watkins (MOD), Ian Fletcher and Desmond Bowen (Cabinet Office), Sir Jeremy Greenstock (UKMis New York), Sir Christopher Meyer (Washington), Sir Roderic Lyne (Moscow), Sir John Holmes (Paris), Sir Nigel Sheinwald (UKRep Brussels) and Sir Emyr Jones Parry (UKDel NATO).

Yours,

MATTHEW RYCROFT

Mark Sedwill
FCO

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