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Iraq: Follow-up to SCR 1441

The Foreign Secretary met the PUS, Sir J Greenstock, Sir D Manning and Peter Ricketts in his office this morning to discuss Iraq policy.

Sir J Greenstock said that he believed we could get a second Resolution provided the Americans did not go for material breach too early. What we needed were the facts to convince nine members of the Security Council, which would not – he thought – need much persuading. When the time came, he recommended that the UK put down a draft Resolution: if we could show that we had done everything possible, then we would be in the best possible position if – in the end – there were no Resolution. Sir D Manning said that, when it came to tabling texts, we should aim to ask the French to co-sponsor. The Foreign Secretary agreed.

Sir J Greenstock continued that the real strength of SCR 1441 lay in OPs1 and 2, not OP4. OP1 reaffirmed Iraqi material breach up to the passage of 1441. OP2 suspended material breach to give Iraq a final opportunity. So, you did not need OP4 (and 11 and 12) to get to OP13 (“serious consequences”). He said that he was already using this argument in the Council to some effect, linking OPs1 and 2 to SCR 678 (which had authorised military action in 1990) and SCR 687 (the ceasefire Resolution, which had said that there would be a ceasefire only as long as Iraq cooperated over disarmament, Kuwaiti and humanitarian issues). He cautioned that if we focused too much on OP4 there was a danger of weakening OPs1 and 2. The PUS said that we could use OPs1 and 2 and OPs4, 11 and 12. Much would depend on how the situation developed. The Foreign Secretary agreed that it would be a mistake to focus exclusively on OPs1 and 2.

Sir J Greenstock said that UNMOVIC was desperate for professional help (eg sniffing equipment and investigation techniques). So far they had been underwhelmed by the initial UK response. The Foreign Secretary agreed that we should do more.



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(Simon McDonald)

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