

DECLASSIFIED

Page 1 of 7

UKMIS New York -Conf

From: * UKMIS New York -Conf
Sent: 02 December 2002 13:47
To: NY - UKMIS Iraq & Kuwait - C
Subject: FW: Strategy Note
Importance: High

Worth a read, especially the (sensible) bid on the declaration.

-----Original Message-----

From:
Sent: 02 December 2002 11:56
To: Iraq Policy
Cc: Simon McDonald; Patrick Davies; Jonathan Sinclair; Tom Fletcher
(London); (London); Asif Ahmad; l; Ed Owen; Michael Williams;
Mark Sedwill; Washington -Conf; * UKMIS New York -Conf
Subject: Strategy Note
Importance: High

Dear Alastair

Cc: Iraq Policy, PS/Ministers, PS/PUS, Special Advisors, Asif Ahmed, Martin
Howard, Pam Teare, Desmond Bowen, Danny Pruce, Godric Smith, Tom Kelly, John Scarlett,
Mark Sedwill,

You asked for strategic public objectives on Iraq, setting out our aims, and working through the difficult issues. I attach two papers: one - Public Objectives - for public use; the other - Media Tactics - makes suggestions for public language which we should seek to agree with the US, plus some ideas for media initiatives.

Both have been approved by the Foreign Secretary.

John Williams

Press Secretary

Public objectives

Our strategic objective is a stable and peaceable Iraq which no longer possesses weapons of mass destruction, defies the United Nations' authority, or intimidates its people.

Our immediate objectives are to:

1. achieve Iraq's full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441, which warns of the serious consequences Iraq would face if it continued to violate of its UN obligations;

DECLASSIFIED

533

DECLASSIFIED

2. give full support to the UN weapons inspections authorised by 1441;
3. maintain the credible threat of force, without which the Iraqi regime would feel free to go on defying the international community;
4. remove the threat to Iraq's people and neighbours which its weapons of mass destruction represent;
5. ensure that, if a material breach occurs, the Iraqi regime is brought into full compliance with its disarmament obligations, in accordance with 1441;
6. restore and sustain the UN's authority by ending a decade of defiance.

Achieving our Objectives

Our aim is to achieve these objectives by peaceful means, backed by the credible threat of force. But we are clear that, for that threat to be credible, we must be prepared to use force, in response to clear evidence of Iraqi non-compliance, for example as the Foreign Secretary said: "material breach means something significant: some behaviour or pattern of behaviour which is serious. Amongst such breaches could be action by the Government of Iraq seriously to obstruct or impede the inspectors, to intimidate witnesses, or a pattern of behaviour where any single action appears relatively minor but the actions as a whole add up to something deliberate and more significant: something which shows Iraq's intention not to comply."

We will look to the United Nations to enforce UNSCR 1441 in such circumstances, but reserve the right to take military action, as a last resort.

As the Foreign Secretary said: "the preference of the British government, in the event of a material breach is that there should be a second Resolution authorising military action. The faith now being placed in the Security Council by all members of the United Nations, including the US, requires the Council to show a corresponding level of responsibility. So far it has more than done so. I believe it will do so in the future. But we must reserve our position in the event that it does not."

Resolution 1441 sets out a peaceful means of disarming Iraq's WMD. It is Saddam Hussein's choice to comply or to provoke military action.

We regard the disarmament of Iraq's WMD as a vital national interest because:

- (a) aggression by Iraq against its neighbours could not be ignored by the international community: we must ensure that cannot happen again;
- (b) the UN embodies the international order on which our own peace and security are based: we cannot ignore Iraqi violations any longer.

Any action taken to achieve our objectives will be in conformity with international law, including the UN Charter and international humanitarian law.

DECLASSIFIED

The wider campaign against terror

Our determination to rid Iraq of its weapons of terror is founded in our wider campaign to rid the world of threats to the peace and security of our peoples, whether by terrorist organisations or by rogue states.

We reaffirm our objective to eliminate terrorism as a force in international affairs, in particular by:

- (a) deterring states from supporting, harbouring or acting complicity with international terrorist groups; and
- (b) making efforts to change the climate in which terrorists operate.

This latter point will mean a renewed effort to end the conflict between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples by working for a peaceful settlement based on the relevant Security Council Resolutions, which place obligations on both sides, and on neighbouring states.

Our immediate priority will be to support the efforts of the Quartet to finalise a roadmap towards a two-state solution. This will include the reform of Palestinian institutions and reciprocal steps by Israel to demonstrate a commitment to a peace process.

The future of Iraq

We have no quarrel with the people of Iraq. Indeed, our aim is an Iraq which:

- (a) respects fundamental freedoms and basic human rights;
- (b) has a responsible and representative government, under the rule of law; and
- (c) regains its rightful place as a prosperous nation.

Iraq's possession of WMD is regarded by the regime as crucial to its ability to suppress dissent, which it does by the most brutally anti-democratic methods. Removing Iraq's WMD is therefore an essential condition for ending the regime's oppression of the Iraqi people.

And it is an essential condition for the international support which could be expected by a peaceable Iraq which was no longer able to use WMD to threaten its neighbours and intimidate its people.

In those circumstances, we would be prepared to offer a Contract with the Iraqi People involving:

- i) humanitarian relief;
- ii) a reconstruction programme;
- iii) help with the re-building of orderly government, an efficient civil service and a properly-

functioning civic society;

iv) support for a stable Iraq within secure borders;

v) the end of sanctions, in accordance with UN resolutions.

We believe the achievement of these objectives would establish a unified Iraq within its current borders, living at peace with itself and its neighbours, reflecting the diversity of its population, respecting international law. This outcome is in the interests of the Iraqi people, of the region, and of the whole international community.

MEDIA TACTICS

This paper covers the difficult questions on which we need a common approach, or agreement on how to limit public differences. And it suggests some media/policy initiatives.

Difficulties

1. The declaration on December 8.

The immediate task is to maintain a strong message that Iraq must comply fully with OP 3, while making clear to our publics that a false declaration does not mean immediate war. This will be difficult. The language of the resolution itself is rather subtle and complex for media interviews, or even for speeches. It contains a deliberate ambiguity and therefore sounds evasive to the media.

There are two dangers:

i) that the UK sounds softer than the US;

ii) that, in our efforts to avoid this divergence, we all fail to explain what comes next.

Our publics must be ready for what happens, prepared for us to express disbelief at Iraq's limited admission, but not yet ready to proclaim a material breach.

We should therefore say all week:

The declaration itself will not be the moment to decide if Saddam is in breach, any more than it can be the moment to decide if he is complying. It must first be tested by the inspectors.

We have no illusions about Saddam Hussein. With his long record of obstruction and deceit, he is unlikely to make an honest declaration. We want to see his dishonesty demonstrated by inspections, if he makes a false declaration.

Does that not mean he can get away with this by ensuring the inspectors never find proof?

We will not allow this to become an indefinite game of hide and seek. The last inspection regime listed large stockpiles of WMD which must be accounted for openly and honestly.

DECLASSIFIED

Concealment is not compliance.

And what if he floods us with information designed to bog the inspections down?

Same answers.

2. Material breach

Beyond the declaration, we will be under mounting media pressure to define material breach. The media want to establish different thresholds in London and in some parts of the Administration in Washington.

The Foreign Secretary talked in the Commons about impeding the inspectors, intimidating witnesses, something deliberate and significant: 'something which shows Iraq's intention not to comply'.

We could add a more subtle definition, that the tests of Iraq's compliance must include failure to co-operate with the inspectors in finding and destroying the WMD unaccounted for when UNMOVIC's inspections ended. This definition could come more sharply into focus if a game of hide and seek begins. These weapons are known to have existed - where is the proof of their destruction?

3. No Fly Zones

Do Iraqi attacks on our aircraft put Saddam in material breach? For a moment last week, it sounded as though the answer from part of the US administration was 'yes' and the British 'no'. Our room for public manoeuvre is limited. Britain is on record as saying it would not interpret OP 8 in a way that makes attacks on our aircraft a material breach of 1441. We have made clear that our aircraft operate in support of 688, and have the right of self-defence. The Defence Secretary has said such attacks are relevant, but did not say they violate 1441.

The best place to rest is: Attacks on our aircraft are relevant, because they are hostile acts, and therefore are not a sign of Iraqi good behaviour. But the focus of 1441 is disarming Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and that will be our focus in judging Iraq's compliance or non-compliance with it.

4. Regime change

At first blush this is the most difficult issue to reconcile because regime change is an explicit aim of US policy, and cannot be an explicit aim of ours but:

- regime change has been an objective of US policy since 1998;
- recently, there has been unanimity in the US administration (President's Cincinnati

DECLASSIFIED

speech, and comments by Colin Powell last week) that the removal of Iraq's WMD would of itself achieve in a change in the nature of the regime.

We have so far rested on saying the world would be a better place without Saddam, but the aim of our policy is to remove Iraq's WMD. We and the US have both use the argument that if the Iraqi regime were disarmed then the nature of the regime would have changed.

Can we hold the line on:

If Iraq's WMD is removed, the nature of the regime is changed, securing compliance with the UN, and lifting the threat of military action?

Initiatives

1. Contract with the Iraqi People

Both US and UK have 'contracts' drafted. Should we launch jointly? A contract, as summarised in the objectives, would be a powerful signal not only to the people of Iraq, but to opinion in Arab countries, to Muslims in Briton, to European opinion, and to those concerned-but-persuadable Britons who must be our main focus. The US needs the support of the majority of the British public. This can be achieved if we can demonstrate that we care about Iraq. This is not just right, it is reassuring.

Timing: once it is clear that non-compliance is becoming inevitable, and we need to start moving to a new phase.

2. Naming senior officials who should face trial

This would be calculated to divide the senior leadership. We should prepare a list for publication, again, once we start moving to a new phase.

3. Naming officials involved in the WMD programme

This would put pressure on Iraq to comply by making witnesses available; and demonstrate emerging non-compliance to domestic and international opinion. We should consider this earlier than 1 and 2, in the period when Saddam is trying to delay and obstruct inside the line, and when we need to be preparing opinion for declaring a pattern of behaviour amounting to material breach.

Conclusion

We can carry that section of opinion which detests Saddam Hussein but is made uneasy by the appearance of a rush to war. There is an intimate and crucial link between persuadable British opinion, and the tone taken in Washington. It is vital to stick closely together on strategy, tactics and language designed to be firm but reassuring.

John Williams

18/03/2004

DECLASSIFIED

Page 7 of 7

Press Secretary

DECLASSIFIED

18/03/2004