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D Cts(Ops) (073-04)

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*Cabinet Office for Matthew Rycroft
Cabinet Office for Sir Nigel Sheinwald
Cabinet Office for Desmond Bowen
HD/FCO IPU

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Iraq Director
FCOIPU-SSR1
CC Hampshire Constabulary

HOW BEST TO PROGRESS THE IRAQIISATION OF THE SECURITY SECTOR

BACKGROUND

1. On the direction of the Prime Minister, I led a small team to Iraq during the period 20 -23 May to identify what might be done to accelerate Iraqiisation of the Security Sector. The visit was mounted in the context of the Iraqiisation of Security being seen as a major element underpinning the transfer of sovereignty and a critical factor in the longer term exit strategy of the Coalition. This report gives a summary of headline observations. A further, more comprehensive, report will give detail on where we are on Iraqiisation, what needs to be done and by whom.

HEADLINE ISSUES

2. The headline issues are:

a. Progress to date has been mixed. On the down-side energy has been invested without the benefit of an overarching strategy and in the absence of clear policy guidelines in many areas. Access to money and resources has been bedevilled by bureaucratic complexity. There is evidence of initiative overload and the desire to secure short-term advantage has often served to undermine more general progress.

b. However, there is virtually nothing that has gone wrong in the past, which is not recognised by people in Theatre and for which corrective action is now either in place or being quickly put into place. Equipment is now flowing; training is well advanced; real capability is being generated in many areas. A wide range of initiatives are in place and there is no lack of energy or urgency. The creation of the Office of Security Transition (OST)¹ and the appointment of Lt Gen Petreus are all positive.

¹ Formerly the Office of Security Co-operation (OSC).

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- c. The last thing the theatre needs at the moment is novel thinking imposed from outside. The concept of 'acceleration' is misplaced. 'Sustained Effort,' with some changes in emphasis, will produce the desired capability.
- d. The biggest single thing that will move the creation of capability forward is the increased use of military and police assets in mentoring roles. This should involve, for example, widening the concept of embedding troops within Iraqi Civil Defence Corps (ICDC) Units. Given available assets this will mean taking risk on maintaining security.
- e. But there are some major threats to success.
- Policy Direction. Bottom up initiatives are in desperate need of connecting with downward policy direction. Such direction is in 'planning blight' because it must flow from the emerging Iraqi government institutions, specifically the MOD and MOI. For example, continued procrastination over a policy for Iraqi Police Service (IPS) redundancy, could cripple the development of a truly effective and motivated Police Force.
 - Discontinuity as the CPA draws down. The end of the CPA and the start of more conventional Ambassadorial Missions threatens a huge discontinuity in the areas of both policy and resources.
- f. Timescale. There needs to be an honest acceptance of the timescale and conditionality which attends the creation of genuine capability in the Security Sector. 01 July may well be a political watershed, but it cannot be a security watershed in many parts of Iraq in anything other than a limited and, in some places, largely symbolic way. Management of expectations both internationally and in Iraq is vital. The delivery of elections in 2005, in a security environment largely delivered by Iraqi institutions, is a more a realistic and practical objective.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE ?

3. Strategy. The lack of a strategy for Iraqiisation is a key current weakness. Such a strategy should not be authored in London; it needs to be authored, owned and executed in theatre – probably by Lt Gen Petreus in the OST, advised by our own people. Such a strategy needs to have at least the following elements:
- a. An Endsate. There is no common understanding of the constitutional, legal and judicial framework within which all the elements of the Security Sector will eventually operate and interact. One is needed so that decisions can be made on the capabilities to be vested and developed in the various elements of the Security Sector. For example there is no clear policy on the Counter Terrorist (CT) and Public Order (PO) capabilities which the IPS should develop; nor is there a common understanding of the medium-term destiny of the ICDC.
- b. Capacity and Capability Development. The need to develop capacity and capability is well understood and reasonably well advanced. Concerns which previously existed over equipment resourcing are now over; prioritisation and distribution are now the issues.

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- c. Creating and operationalising the Security Sector Architecture for the period of transition. The nature of the Security Sector architecture which is needed during the period of transition is well understood in Theatre although it remains the subject of higher level debate. The concept of partnership is the right one, with operational primacy being finessed on the ground in the light of local circumstance.
- d. Militias. There are at least 51 militias ranging in size from 12 (twelve) to 31,000. Significant work is ongoing within Theatre to determine the best way to deal with them. A combination of transfer into the ISF, retirement and reintegration into civil society are likely to form aspects of what will be a vital sub-strategy.
- e. Money. The resourcing of SSR, and the bureaucracy that has bedevilled timely access to huge amounts of money, is one of the great sadnesses of progress to date. In the immediate future access to Development Fund Iraq (DFI) money will cease and the only way to liberate and focus this funding will be within the framework of the Interim Iraq Government (IIG) system. Separately, the US Congressional Supplemental funds are now committed. The Security Sector will continue to benefit from these funds, but only within the constraints of allocations which are already established and agreed. Some small flexibility will remain in a national context to spend Quick Impact Project money. If momentum on SSR is not to stall we will need to convince the IIG of the need for urgency in agreeing operating budgets for both the MOD and MOI.
- f. Information Operations/Strategic Communications. The need to manage perceptions and expectations in respect of both 01 July and subsequent transition is vital. I sense that the importance of 01 July might already have been talked up too much in the context of the Iraqisation of security. The currency of Information Operations should be 'achievement' not 'promises.'
4. Resources. The subsequent report will detail specific resource issues. We must maintain our current network of UK personnel in key OST positions. We must surge our police mentoring capability: but this needs to be timed correctly to meet Theatre requirements.
5. Influence. In the context of UK's influence with the US and Iraqi Government and of PM's engagement with POTUS there are five principal things we can do in order to help create the conditions for success in Theatre. We must stress:
 - a. The need to achieve closure with the issue of post 30 Jun operational architecture for the Security Sector. Only then can people effectively coordinate action on the ground.
 - b. The need to ensure that Coalition military effort takes operational risk on the security situation in order to re-invest current military capability into SSR tasks. Specifically I would emphasise the need to embed military capability in the ICDC and police mentors in the IPS. This is the only way in which genuine capability will be grown quickly.
 - c. The need for our Joint Diplomatic effort in Baghdad, supported by military advice, to pressurise the IIG to give urgent policy guidance on a range of SSR issues. Such things as police redundancy, police capability and ICDC destiny are key.

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d. The need to ensure continuity of resourcing SSR. Principally this will be diplomatic and military pressure on the Iraqi President, Iraqi Prime Minister and Minister of Finance to ensure the early agreement of operating budgets for the MOD and MOI. We must not allow circumstances to develop in which the Iraqi Security Forces do not get paid.

e. The realities of the time frame and localised conditionality. The Iraqiisation of the Security Sector is not a deliverable on 01 July. It is a possibility that a largely Iraqiised Security Sector could deliver security for elections in Jan 05.

CONCLUSION

6. None of these headlines are not recognised and accepted by all to whom I spoke in Theatre. There is no lack of understanding of what needs to be done and the urgency with which it needs doing. We do need to appreciate that there are no magic formulas or quick fixes; and to understand that novel initiatives are largely counter productive.

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