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### **IRAQ: PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH JEREMY GREENSTOCK**

Jeremy Greenstock met the Prime Minister on 23 January to discuss the handling of Iraq in the UN Security Council in the coming weeks. Copy addresses, you and I were also present.

Jeremy outlined the dynamics in the Security Council, the likely content of Blix's report on 27 January and UK reaction, and options for a second UNSCR in the event of a material breach of 1441.

The Prime Minister set out the following approach:

- (a) The world did not want war, but did not believe Saddam. We needed hard proof if we could possibly get it that Saddam was lying over his WMD, to bring public opinion to accept the need for military action. For this, we would need to give the inspections time.
- (b) At Camp David, the Prime Minister would seek to convince Bush of the need to delay a decision to start military action for a few weeks. To make the case, he would need confirmation that his assumption was correct that the Arabs, particularly the Saudis, only favoured early military action on the basis of a second UNSCR (comment: in hand).
- (c) Between 27 January and the end of March, there should be at least two further regular Blix reports to the Security Council (one in February, one in March, with further reports if the inspectors made significant finds).
- (d) The extra time should be used to maximise the chances of the inspectors finding a smoking gun or of being seriously obstructed (the inspectors should be encouraged to inspect sites which we knew the Iraqis would want to block). The less optimal outcome would be no smoking gun and no serious

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obstruction but a series of regular Blix reports that he was not satisfied with the level of Iraqi cooperation.

- (e) We should keep as close as possible to Blix, to ensure that he took this line on 27 January and in his further reports. We should also press the US to give Blix all the support he needed, to maximise the chances of the inspectors finding a smoking gun.
- (f) The extra time would also give the Arabs the opportunity to press Saddam to go into exile.
- (g) Throughout this period, we should make the argument that the inspectors were not supposed to be a detective agency. They were supposed to receive full Iraqi cooperation in disarming WMD. South Africa was a model of how it could be done.

*Matthew Rycroft*

**MATTHEW RYCROFT**

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