

DG Op Pol/4/6/1/1 (54 & 54a/b 03)

21 March 2003

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COALITION ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR PHASE IV

1. I attach a short paper describing the proposed UK approach to coalition-building for Phase IV. Subject to Chiefs' views, this approach will be put to Ministers as soon as possible.
2. In sum, the paper envisages the UK operating (for military aspects of the coalition) as a sort of 'prime contractor' within overall US-led arrangements. An understanding is needed with the US about this. At a practical level we need to move ahead from the informal ad hoc bilateral contacts (already in hand) to more structured arrangements, initially through defence attaches and progressively into pol/mil and mil/mil discussions into the actual command chain.
3. We need to pursue this approach as a matter of urgency, since Phase IV may be almost upon us.
4. That said, and although the preparatory steps described in the paper can move ahead now, full implementation of the plan will depend both on a satisfactory UN authorisation for Phase IV and an understanding with the US about the way this military aspect of the coalition-building is managed. Hence, the lead role of the IPU in the first two recommendations.

Ian Lee

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DG Op Pol

COALITION ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR PHASE IV

ISSUE

1. How to take forward UK's Coalition Engagement Strategy

RECOMMENDATION

2. The Secretariat (Sec(O) and Sec(Iraq) – with the centre of gravity on Sec(O)) should coordinate with the IPU and FCO as follows:
 - Via the IPU, we inform the US that we will require support from other nations to fill a number of key capability areas in Phase IV and that we intend to pursue discussions urgently with potential partners who might provide this.
 - Via the IPU, we enter a dialogue with the US about which nations we may be able to bring on board with IPU, FCO sending a telegram as soon as possible to selected posts formally to identify willing nations.
 - That FCO and MoD should then start bilateral discussions with nations that appear willing, following up with a multilateral meeting when we judge that nations feel comfortable with being openly identified.

BACKGROUND

3. UK aims to reduce to a medium scale commitment to Phase IV by the Autumn 2003. We need to encourage potential coalition partners to commit forces in a way that would directly assist the UK in the tasks we might conduct in Phase IV. While we are working within a US led coalition, we cannot assume that the US will either understand our exact capability requirements, or feel responsible for filling our own specific gaps. A degree of self-help will be required in order to reduce our commitments whilst maintaining a balanced capability that will work within the overall US led coalition.
4. In order to start this process, we require a lead organisation within the MoD who will coordinate our linkages with the IPU and FCO Emergency Unit. I have therefore tasked Hd Sec(O) and Sec(Iraq) to develop the plan for this work and to arrange the coordination of the various elements that are shown on the outline organisation chart attached. A coalition engagement plan will need to be produced and recommendations made on how we approach each nation. This might be by contact with Defence Attachés both here and abroad or by arranging higher level representation including CDS(des) and Ministers, who will need to be briefed accordingly by the relevant staff.
5. We must recognise from the outset that coalition partners will see this as an opportunity in the round: that is, for all forms of Phase IV involvement, not just military. Any action by taken by MoD must be in line with the cross government IPU's overall strategy for Phase IV. It would therefore seem appropriate to ask the IPU to arrange that our intent is passed on to the

US since it is the inter-agency office under Jay Garner (ORHA) that is leading on these issues in the US. This should be phrased in such a way that we explain that we will need to fill some of our capability gaps and that we will be maximising our European, Commonwealth and other particular bilateral linkages in order to discuss this with potential coalition partners without delay. But we will stress that we will keep US informed of our progress and avoid any impression that we are competing with the US for the same capability. Indeed there are many issues that we will need to take forward that can still only be achieved on a UK/US basis.

6. Having informed the US of our intent, we should request that the IPU, FCO task selected UK posts and their Defence Attachés to gauge nations' willingness and capability to participate in Phase IV. Whilst this process has been done once before, the change in strategic circumstances makes it necessary to ask the question again and to authorise these posts to make formal requests to nations. In order to assist the process, this telegram will need to include a brief description, supplied by the directorates of operations and PJHQ, on the capability that we require whilst leaving sufficiently flexibility for other offers.

7. We should then grade the responses along the following lines:

a. Group A. Nations that are able and willing to provide capability at formation level, self deploying and sustainable and are politically acceptable in the Gulf region. Within this group we should pursue a 'pioneer group' straight away (eg Netherlands, Czech Republic) if their offers are available early.

b. Group B. Nations that are able to provide capability at less than formation level, which may not be self deploying and sustainable, and those which may need persuasion to commit.

c. Group C. Nations that can provide token contributions which have more political than military utility; despite some nations being forward leaning, some may cause regional concern.

8. As is already happening in ad hoc contacts, there will be a continuing requirement for high level engagement to encourage potential contributors. But at a lower level, Sec(O)/Sec(Iraq) should conduct coordination meetings with the IPU and SecPol representatives from the FCO Emergency Unit. MoD representation would consist of the regional policy directorates (DOMA and Sec(O), NEPG and DCEE) and the directorates of operations (DMO, DNO and DAO and with or without their staff representing their interests in the SOT) and PJHQ; other directorates would attend as required.

9. The process of bilateral engagement would start initially with the regional directorates arranging a meeting with the nation's DA in London. This meeting would also be attended by representatives from the directorates of operations to explain more about the capability requirement or to analyse in more detail any offer that nation might be making. The engagement process would continue, expanding to bring in others (eg PJHQ and the more specialised directorates such as DMSD) as required, until the capability has been secured.

10. The regular MoD-FCO coordination meetings would be an opportunity to redirect effort where required and to establish whether more senior intervention (military and/or political) might be required to encourage certain nations or whether the process is being driven by its own momentum. It would also be a forum to establish the point at which it may be appropriate for some form of troop contributing nations conference to take place. But in the first instance, it is

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envisaged that the engagement process would be bilateral until such time that nations would be comfortable in being openly identified as a Phase IV coalition contributor.

Enclosure: Outline organisation chart

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COALITION ENGAGEMENT ORGANISATION

DEFENCE

DEFENCE

