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THE PRIME MINISTER
Personal Minute

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I was grateful for your Department's note on reconstruction issues following the Tokyo conference.

I remain concerned that actual delivery of reconstruction on the ground is far too slow. The latest data I have seen from the PCO are not encouraging, with the US likely to miss another set of targets by a considerable distance. I am convinced that the UN and World Bank could be doing more.

We must accelerate the pace of reconstruction, not least to support the political process as we head toward the elections. The note includes some good ideas on pressing the UN and World Bank. But we also need to increase the impact of our bilateral programme in the short term. And we need to find more effective ways of getting the US to spend their funds more quickly and with greater impact.

I am particularly concerned about the lack of follow-through on reconstruction in those cities and towns where the IIG, with MNF support, has regained control from insurgents (e.g. Najaf, Samarra, Tal Afar). These are, of course, not in the MND (SE) region where our spending is concentrated. But DFID has considerable experience of post-conflict situations which I would like to see us

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using across Iraq. We need a reliable mechanism for progress and discussing it frankly with the Americans.

I told King Abdullah of Jordan on 5 October that we would take a positive approach to his suggestion that some funds for Iraqi reconstruction be used for projects which benefited both Jordan and Iraq. We ask a lot of Jordan, and it has a good case on this point. I should be grateful if you could ask your officials to look at this again.

I look forward to discussing these points at Thursday's meeting.

26 October 2004

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