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Secretary of the Cabinet and Head of the Home Civil Service

PRIME MINISTER

## RECOGNITION FOR SERVICE IN IRAQ

The Ministerial Group on Iraq is concerned about the ineligibility of most civilians (including the police) for the Iraq Campaign Medal. Ministers are keen to ensure that their service in Iraq is recognised in some way. There are three options for officially recognising that service. There are a number of very complex issues to take account of before a firm view can be taken.

2. Firstly, the criteria for the Iraq Medal could be amended to encompass other civilians. In process terms this could be the simplest option. However, this option is not recommended. The military feel that there should be a distinction between campaign and humanitarian roles and medals.

3. The second is a medal specifically to recognise civilian service in Iraq during the current campaign, which would involve production of a new, separately defined medal and ribbon. Decisions would need to be taken on whether recipients needed to be working for recognised organisations and if so, which. The drawback of this option is the pressure it would create for a series of other medals including medals for past campaigns.

4. The third is to institute a Humanitarian Service Medal (HSM) as a complementary award to the Operational Service Medal (a military medal). The Queen approved this in principle in September 1999. It would recognise service in a variety of non-war situations, which might include:

- i. Support to civilian administrations in the immediate aftermath of conflict or terrorist activity;
- ii. Peace-keeping or policing in civilian circumstances (e.g. election monitoring), and;
- iii. Provision of aid relief over a period of time (e.g. in Ethiopia and Rwanda).

This could provide an appropriate means for rewarding civilian service in Iraq, as well as longer-term application.

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5. My preference would be to create a new Humanitarian Service Medal, as agreed already in principle with The Queen, and that civilians working in Iraq should be the first recipients of it. Before making an announcement I think we need to do further work on cost and the details of the medal in general and eligibility specifically in Iraq. If you agree, I will commission the necessary work.

6. I am copying this note to Jack Straw, David Blunkett and Douglas Alexander.

*Sue Pither*

PP

**ANDREW TURNBULL**

11 June 2004