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To:
From: KUWAX - etelegrams
Subject: FW: I:RR:REST:BASRA: CREATING AND SUPPORTING A NEW
CONSULATE: BASRA/FCOLN 77:Id=1989684
Sent: 13 July 2004 04:01:45 GMT

-----Original Message-----

From: COMCEN Gateway 1a
Sent: 12 July 2004 20:43
To: KUWAX - etelegrams
Subject: I:RR:REST:BASRA: CREATING AND SUPPORTING A NEW CONSULATE: BASRA/FCOLN
77:Id=1989684
Importance: Low

ZCZC
LNKKDN 7770 ZILNAN 1351
RESTRICTED
RR KUWAI
FM BASRA TO FCOLN
121908Z JUL
GRS 451

RESTRICTED
FM BASRA
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELNO 77
OF 121908Z JULY 04
INFO ROUTINE BRITISH OFFICE BAGHDAD, KUWAIT

MIPT

SUBJECT: BASRA: CREATING AND SUPPORTING A NEW CONSULATE

SUMMARY

1. Some thoughts on our general approach to next steps.

DETAIL

2. Security remains the greatest immediate preoccupation. Some essential physical security works remain to be completed. Less than half of our Gurkha guard team has arrived and their employer's local management does not inspire confidence. The OSA visit later this week will be an important opportunity to take stock.

3. As we prepare to move beyond the bare essentials of an office, a secure perimeter, accommodation in hardened containers and a canteen - none yet fully in place - our duty of care requires that, after security, morale must be a high priority. Access to social amenities is currently less than any Post I have seen. We will need to provide some standard facilities, plus access to web-based mail (yahoo) to enable staff to stay in touch with home, and to remember always that there is no access at all to off-site

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alternatives

4. Our structure is about right, with the important absence of an ability to issue visas to key contacts and senior visitors. We are exploring with Kuwait the possibility of offering a limited service based on papers. If this does not prove practical we may need to request provision of equipment to issue locally. I do not expect this to require new staff - a small part of one person's time should suffice.
5. Rapid staff turnover (the tour cycle, with breather visits, leaves only 5 months in Post before moving on) means there is a lack of institutional memory. And there is as yet no cadre of experienced local staff to provide continuity. We need to train new staff, build up our knowledge base (material inherited from CPA South is a good start but needs to be digested) and extend our range of contacts so that we can do effective political work over the critical next seven months.
6. We need to take care to get the next phase of estate development right. This means breaking the rush-job habits which have, necessarily, been a feature of the inception phase and to create a culture of good working practices to develop and settle a new team of about 250 UKBS and Expatriate support staff and contractors. We have an excellent team here. And the Consulate will be a fine building when completed.
7. We are probably right to mainstream the support functions previously carried out by Iraq Directorate. But for this to work, staff in London unfamiliar with the working environment here will need to continue to show awareness of the local impact of decisions, especially while we have no local budget and all expenditure is approved at the centre.

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