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ANDREW TURNBULL

(via email)

**IRAQ: RECONSTRUCTION**

I attach a draft minute from you to the Prime Minister. I have opted for an ad hoc group of Ministers because this is inherently more flexible and less ponderous than a formal sub-group of DOP.

signed: **DESMOND BOWEN**

27 March 2003

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**DRAFT MINUTE TO THE PRIME MINISTER**

**IRAQ: RECONSTRUCTION**

This minute seeks your approval for new arrangements to manage the reconstruction planning for Iraq.

2. The current arrangements include:

- daily meetings of your Ministerial group and COBR(Restricted) which focus on latest developments and immediate priorities;
- daily Chiefs of Staff meetings to review military and related progress;
- regular, wider COBR meetings, which maintain an overview of progress in Iraq and links to the domestic agenda.

The Foreign Office-led Iraq Planning Unit and Treasury-led group on economic and financial issues have also done very good work.

3. But as we move towards the post-conflict phase we will need a coherent policy on an enormous range of issues, including the role of the UN, Iraqi political process, reconstruction and reform, economic and financial issues (including debt and reparations), security sector reform and reducing our own military role. Ministers will need to take policy decisions on the basis of work led by senior officials.

4. I propose a new Ad Hoc Ministerial Group on Iraq Reconstruction reporting to you. The Foreign Secretary should chair. The Defence Secretary, International Development Secretary, Chancellor of the

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Exchequer and Trade and Industry Secretary should be members, with other Ministers as necessary. OD Secretariat would provide the secretariat. Its terms of reference would be: "to formulate policy for the reconstruction, reform and development of Iraq".

5. This should be supported by an Ad Hoc Officials Group on Iraq Reconstruction led by OD Secretariat. Desmond Bowen would chair. The Group would comprise senior officials from the same Departments, including the Head of the Iraq Planning Unit and the leader of the group working on economic and financial issues in Iraq.

6. Other groups would continue to meet as now, except that the wider COBR meetings would be less frequent. Many of the domestic and consular issues overseen by the group are sufficiently managed for now. It will nevertheless be useful for a wider group of Departments to be briefed on Iraq developments, say, twice a week.

7. The arrangements for morning and evening reports will continue as now.

8. If you are content with the establishment of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Group, I will inform Departments accordingly.

9. Copies go to David Manning here.

ANDREW TURNBULL

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