

DECLASSIFIED

To: NYMIX - eTelegrams
From: COMCEN Gateway 2
Subject: OUTTELS:OO:CONF:PERSONAL IRAQ: WHERE WE GO FROM
HERE:NYMIS/FCOLN-31011007
Sent: 31 January 2003 01:06:18 GMT

ZCZC
ZILNAN 1337
CONFIDENTIAL
OO FCOLN
OO BEIJI BEBER CAOFF MADRI MODAD MOSCO PARIS
OO SOSFA VIMIS WASHI
FM NYMIS TO FCOLN
310105Z JAN
GRS N/C

CONFIDENTIAL
PERSONAL
FM UKMIS NEW YORK
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO 174
OF 310105Z JANUARY 03
INFO IMMEDIATE , BEIJING, BERLIN, CABINET OFFICE, MADRID
INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK, MOSCOW, PARIS, SOSFA, UKMIS VIENNA
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON,

IRAQ LIMITED

WASHINGTON - PLEASE PASS TO PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY

SUBJECT: PERSONAL IRAQ: WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

SUMMARY

1. We need to hammer home the message that further time is a cop-out; continue working as hard as possible to provide a "smoking gun"; further develop our thinking on a second resolution; and look at other UN action we might have to take in parallel (e.g. lifting the embargo for humanitarian/UN agencies). Securing a second resolution is going to take time and coaching. A more nuanced and consultative US approach would work wonders.

DETAIL

2. I promised advice on Council tactics in the coming period, in particular on how to maximise the likelihood of a second resolution.

3. The last few days have demonstrated two things: Blix's report has moved the debate from Iraq's performance to what we should do about its non-compliance. The contention of Russia, China, Germany and France that Iraq's co-operation is pretty good so far does not echo in the Council. At the same time, all other Council members want to give inspections longer. Time is the straw they are clutching to in the hope that tougher decisions can wait for public opinion to be impressed by tougher facts.

4. The key dates that we can identify so far include:

DECLASSIFIED

407

DECLASSIFIED

- 5 Feb: Powell's presentation of evidence to the Security Council. A thoroughly convincing briefing will undoubtedly win support. Indeed, some may be looking for it to provide the cover they need to change position. But a weak presentation will leave us worse off. France, Russia, Germany and Iraq itself will grab the opportunity to claim that the plug cannot possibly be pulled on that basis;

- (Incidentally we have picked up rumours that the Iraqis will send Tariq Aziz to the event. If the US decides to give the briefing in open session, Aziz would sit at the table unless a majority of Council members objected).

- 14 Feb: Blix and El-Baradei will provide a further update to the Council. The Iraqis will do what they can to be good boys and muddy the waters over co-operation. Nonetheless, it is not yet clear the Iraqis realise just how much they need rapidly to do - another two private interviews were cancelled on 30 January while the 29 January Iraqi letter does not appear to provide the new evidence for which the inspectors asked. The press are reporting that Blix and El-Baradei have been invited back to Baghdad for talks before 10 February - as of 302000Z, UNMOVIC had not received that invitation;

- 3 Mar: Blix will present the UNMOVIC quarterly report, which is likely to be the occasion for another update on inspections (if they are still proceeding).

5. In addition to these fixed dates, the Secretary-General has said he would like to brief Council members on Iraq contingency planning sometime in early February. This is mainly to provide cover for Secretariat activity and, the Germans tell us, to avoid a repeat of criticisms during the Gulf War that the UN did not do enough to cope with refugee flows. We must also expect that, at some critical juncture, perhaps immediately before or after 14 February, the NAM will ask for an open debate on Iraq. We cannot resist this. Unless the tide of opinion had turned substantially by then, the main themes will be the need for Iraq to comply and the need to resist going to war.

6. So how should we respond?

(a) Hammer home the message that further time is a cop-out. It gives the Iraqis comfort; means they do not take the necessary steps to comply; and guarantees unilateral US military action. The only solution is getting the Iraqis to "crack" by showing them that the Security Council is determined and willing to contemplate force. It might be time to start lobbying along these lines in all Security Council capitals, ideally at Ministerial level. We also need to keep up the pressure on France - if they shift, the rest of the "nos" will begin reconsidering their positions;

(b) Continue working as hard as possible to provide a "smoking gun" (or denial of access) through UNMOVIC. To my mind, this is indispensable; and we must fight for time for it. We should press the US hard on the need for their presentation to be convincing and for them to pass any other intelligence to UNMOVIC. We must also keep UNMOVIC up to the mark;

(c) Further develop our thinking on a second resolution. Most

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

crucially and rapidly we need a clear understanding of our legal bottom lines. For reasons that are not totally clear, the German Mission has given us the elements of a Resolution that they say would maximise their dilemma in the Council (by e-mail to Pattison, Grainger, and Tanfield). We need to consider whether this, or some other implicit formulation, would be enough. The most realistic way forward may well be an ultimatum - we need further work on how best this could be constructed (e.g. making use of the UNMOVIC clusters) and how we would ensure that this was (i) not exploited by the Iraqis; (ii) did not simply lead to a postponed decision in a divided Council; (iii) was acceptable to the Americans;

We are likely to end up negotiating a resolution in the Council come what may - if the US is set on unilateral action other Council members may propose their own blocking or delaying resolutions. Any draft which we decide to put down is likely to be met with a French/Russian counterdraft. I will need some discretion on when is the best moment to float a second resolution, in case we have to move into blue - near final form - fast. At present I do not see this coming to a head before the second half of February as we work to soften the Council, but it could be sooner if Powell's presentation dazzles or, conversely, the Americans lose patience (clearly we should be prepared in case either transpires);

(d) Consider what other action we would have to take in the UN, in parallel to, or shortly after the adoption of a second Resolution (e.g. lifting the embargo for humanitarian or UN agencies delivering assistance to Iraq). We have produced a short paper to help get thinking on this issue (by e-mail to MED, UND, and Legal Advisers).

7. Securing a second Resolution is going to take time and some coaching of the Security Council. 1441 took four times as long as we first imagined. Our policy as we go into the meetings at Camp David is therefore well justified. A more nuanced and consultative approach by the US, even for a few days, would also work wonders - focussed more on why we need to deal with Iraqi non-compliance and less on the relentless drive to an inevitable war. Powell's decision to address the Security Council has to be used as discussion time, not just a lecture.

Desk Officer for Iraq:
Firecrest

and on

GREENSTOCK

YYYY

||||

NNNN

DECLASSIFIED