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PS

AD HOC MINISTERIAL

1. The Secretary of State will have seen the agenda for this week's Ministerial. John Sawers is also attending. A few points that are likely to dominate discussion.

Reconstruction

2. There is a head of steam within the MOD about the lack of progress on reconstruction. As the military see it, CPA in general, and CPA South in particular, have failed to deliver. As a result, the Coalition is losing consent, the military are having to take on tasks which should be undertaken by civilians, and in the process the military are becoming over-stretched and vulnerable. MOD want us to spend more national resources in the South on quick impact projects. An MOD-sponsored Mott MacDonald needs-assessment mission has identified £60 million worth of projects. Work is in hand within Whitehall to mesh the Mott MacDonald proposals with the wider CPA strategy which will emerge out of the CENTCOM conference (a DFID lead).

3. Four operational conclusions arise out of this:

- We need to maintain pressure on DFID to deliver quick results. Their approach so far has been too theological needs assessments missions, followed by discussions of whether proposals are 'developmentally sound'.
- Fixing these problems will require more staff (not less), particularly in the South. Hilary Synnott will give CPA South leadership at last. But he needs technical and specialist assistance. He has just requested an additional 34 secondees to work on reconstruction issues. He should get many of these.

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- Concerns about security argue against putting in more staff, but holding staff back, or withdrawing staff temporarily, will only compound the problem. The immediate solution is to strengthen security measures in CPA South, as recommended by the security advisers. Civilian staff also need to be provided with a large fleet of armoured vehicles: until these arrive, which will take time, we need more assistance with escorting from the military to ensure CPA staff are not trapped in their offices as they are at the moment. Resources for security assets are an issue. But the principle should be that we provide the number of security assets we need for people to do their jobs properly, rather than limit the number of tasks we take on to the number of security assets we have on the ground (as some around Whitehall have been suggesting). This will be expensive.
- All this is going to cost a lot of money. I am not sure we will be able to do all we need to do within current budgets. Bremer is about to ask for \$15-\$18 billion to meet the needs of reconstruction. The Treasury may have to look again at the sums they are providing.

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