

CONFIDENTIAL  
IRAQ: NEXT STEPS AT THE UN  
From: FCO

TO IMMEDIATE UKREP BRUSSELS  
TELNO 16  
OF 211921Z FEBRUARY 03  
AND TO IMMEDIATE SECURITY.COUNCIL POSTS, EU POSTS  
AND TO IMMEDIATE EU ENLARGEMENT POSTS, ISLAMIC POSTS, CANBERRA  
AND TO IMMEDIATE TOKYO, OTTAWA, PRETORIA CAPETOWN, NATO POSTS  
INFO IMMEDIATE CABINET OFFICE, MODUK, DFID  
INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK

FROM POLITICAL DIRECTOR

1. I know that there is a great deal of press speculation about what happens next at the UN. I am sure many of you are being asked by host governments. This telegram simply gives you a heads up on what will be happening next week. Please take no action until you get fuller guidance which we will send on 24 February.

2. The present plan is to table a simple draft resolution in the Security Council, probably on 24 February. This would provide the necessary legal authority for military action if necessary. But we would not press it to an immediate vote. We would make clear that it was part of a strategy to give Iraq another short period in which to demonstrate finally and fully whether it was cooperating in order to achieve voluntary disarmament of its WMD. We would indicate that we would not be seeking a vote on our text for another two weeks or so, but were not prepared for the process to string out in the absence of a clear will by Iraq to comply with 1441.

3. After the tabling of this resolution, we would expect several further rounds of discussion in the Security Council in the following ten days, culminating in a report by the Inspectors to a meeting on or around 7 March, probably attended by Foreign Ministers. Tabling will also lead to an intensive lobbying campaign of the elected members of the Security Council involving a good deal of travel by Ministers. We are coordinating this with the Americans and the Spaniards.

4. No doubt the French and Germans will be competing in the same market. We have no interest in playing up the element of competition. Our own position flows inexorably from our conclusion, based on over three months of experience with the inspection regime established by 1441, that the Iraqis have no intention of cooperating seriously on the basis offered them in 1441, and that they have thrown away the opportunity given to them there. The credibility of the UN requires the Security Council to face up to the implications of this. Jeremy Greenstock will be deploying the full case in the Security Council on Iraq's failure to comply, and we will ensure that the reporting telegrams are copied widely as further material for you.

5. I am conscious that there is a big demand for more regular and systematic guidance on the operational points you should be getting across to host governments. I am setting in hand a system here to get you an up-date at least twice a week while the crisis remains at its present pitch. We are also producing a daily "core script" for media purposes: if you are not receiving this and would find it useful, please e-mail Amanda Tanfield in MED who will arrange it.

STRAW

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