

DECLASSIFIED



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

AFT 0103 0122 1012 001 A / 11 / 1

33532
Private Office

22 APR 2003

From the Private Secretary

17 April 2003

Dear Simon,

IRAQ: ORHA

(6) The Prime Minister was grateful for the Foreign Secretary's minute of 15 February.

The Prime Minister strongly agrees with the recommendation that we should increase significantly the level of UK political and practical support to ORHA, including the secondment of significant numbers of staff in priority areas. As a general rule, our role in humanitarian aid and in the reconstruction of Iraq should be commensurate with our contribution to the military phase of the conflict. We should seek to maximise our influence over ORHA. He is pleased that progress is being made on agreeing the legal basis of our involvement in ORHA. As he has said at Cabinet and at the Ad Hoc Ministerial meeting on Iraq on several occasions, he wants us to ensure that British officials are present and prominent at all levels of ORHA.

A number of conclusions flow from this policy:

- (a) **Identifying secondees.** We understand that the first UK secondees are likely to be needed in Iraq by the first weekend in May. The Prime Minister would therefore be grateful for a list from the FCO and DfID of which secondees they have identified from their departments, which slot each will fill, and when each will arrive in Iraq. He would also be grateful for a similar list from the Cabinet Office covering secondees from government departments other than FCO and DfID.
- (b) **Funding.** The Prime Minister believes that the funds made available to DfID from the reserve should be used to support activity within the ORHA structure, including the funding of officials from other government departments, subject to HMG retaining control over where the UK secondees

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED



work and the activities they carry out. The Prime Minister would be grateful for confirmation that the funding issues are resolved.

- (c) **ORHA regional office.** As discussed at this morning's Ad Hoc Ministerial Meeting on Iraq, the Prime Minister favours the UK leading one of ORHA's regional offices, unless the scoping study concludes that this is impossible. He would be grateful for an update.

All of the work commissioned above should reach me by noon on 25 April please, taking account of the 24 April meeting of the Ministerial Group on Iraq.

I am copying this letter to Anna Bewes (DfID), Peter Watkins (MOD), Mark Bowman (HMT), Erica Zimmer (DTI), David Brummell (Attorney General's Office), and Sir Andrew Turnbull and Desmond Bowen (Cabinet Office).

Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading 'Matthew Rycroft'.

MATTHEW RYCROFT

Simon McDonald
FCO

DECLASSIFIED