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From: Laurie Bristow
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To: Private Secretary

SUBJECT: A VISION FOR IRAQ AND THE IRAQI PEOPLE

ISSUE

1. Text and outline handling strategy for a "Vision for Iraq".

TIMING

2. We are likely to wish to launch the "Vision" immediately after the outcome of efforts to secure a second UN Security Council Resolution and before the commencement of any hostilities.

PREFERRED OPTIONS

3. That the Secretary of State confirms that he is content in principle with the attached text and outline handling strategy in paragraphs 6-8 below.

AGREED BY

4. MED, PDPD/CIC, News Department. The draft text has been widely cleared with interested Whitehall Departments, who have consulted their Ministers where necessary.

PARLIAMENT AND MEDIA

5. There is likely to be intense Parliamentary and media interest, both domestically and in the Arab world. A detailed handling plan is being developed and will need to be agreed quickly once the outcome of negotiations in New York and the likely subsequent sequence of events is clearer.

BACKGROUND AND ARGUMENT

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6. An earlier draft was submitted for circulation to Ministerial colleagues by on 27 February. The attached draft is now an agreed text that reflects the views of interested departments. It is likely though that it will need some revision depending on the precise circumstances and timing of its launch: arrangements to do this are in hand, in co-operation with the Cabinet Office.
7. The intention is that the Vision will be launched in a manner that provides maximum impact, both with the Iraqi people and with wider public opinion. The Vision and the messages accompanying its launch will be critical to reassuring Iraqis and the Arab world about our post-conflict objectives. The launch will therefore need to be supported by an extensive campaign of background briefing in support of our key messages to UK and Arab media on our approach to "day after" issues.
8. The text is now being shared with US contacts. The purpose of this is to ensure that there are no surprises and that our Vision is consistent with any similar exercise that the US plans to conduct. We do not though plan to produce a joint document or simply to reflect US views in our own.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9. None.

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Cc: Iraq Policy (Conf)

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A VISION FOR IRAQ AND THE IRAQI PEOPLE

Iraq is a country with a long history, a rich culture and an educated people. It has huge potential. Yet under Saddam Hussein its people have been driven into poverty and denied basic human rights. His defiance of United Nations resolutions demanding the disarmament of his nuclear, chemical, biological and long-range missile capacity has led to sanctions. Saddam's rule of fear and repression has tortured and killed thousands of Iraqis and led to two wars of aggression against Iraq's neighbours.

For 12 years, Saddam has defied the will of the United Nations and undermined its authority. We have done all that we can to persuade him to disarm and thereby avoid military conflict. If Saddam refuses even now to cooperate fully with the UN, then he forces us to take the military route to achieve the disarmament of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, we will do all that we can to minimise civilian casualties or damage to civilian infrastructure by targeting only legitimate military objectives. We will mobilise the international community to provide emergency humanitarian relief.

Our aim is to disarm Saddam of his weapons of mass destruction, which threaten his neighbours and his people. Our presence in Iraq if military action is required to secure compliance with UN resolutions will be temporary. But our commitment to support the people of Iraq will be for the long term. The Iraqi people deserve to be lifted from tyranny and allowed to determine the future of their country for themselves. We pledge to work with the international community to ensure that the Iraqi people can exploit their country's resources for their own benefit, and contribute to their own reconstruction, with international support where needed. We wish to help the Iraqi people restore their country to its proper dignity and place in the community of nations, abiding by its international obligations and free from UN sanctions.

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We will support the Iraqi people in their desire for:-

- Freedom: an Iraq which respects fundamental human rights, including freedom of thought, conscience and religion and the dignity of family life, and whose people live free from repression and the fear of arbitrary arrest.
- Good Government: an independent Iraq respecting the rule of law, whose government reflects the diversity and choice of its population and provides them with key public services, especially health, education and water.
- International Respect: an Iraq respected by its neighbours which plays its full role as a member of the international community.
- Peace: a unified Iraq within its current borders living at peace with itself and with its neighbours.
- Prosperity: all Iraqis sharing the wealth created by its economy and its oil reserves, drawing on the talents and skills of its people.

We will help by:-

- Working with the UN and international community to help meet the humanitarian needs and prioritise resources to feed and care for the people of Iraq.
- Enabling Iraqis to establish their own effective representative government and encouraging UN involvement in this process
- Achieving a swift end to sanctions in accordance with UN Security Council resolutions.
- Supporting Iraq's re-integration into the region and the wider international community, with actions including the reopening of land borders.
- Seeking a fair and sustainable solution to Iraq's debt problems.
- Promoting increased aid from the international community.
- Supporting an international reconstruction programme, and helping Iraq make the transition to a more prosperous and dynamic economy.
- Promoting investment in Iraq's oil industry, managed transparently and fairly, and trade in open world markets, for the benefit of the Iraqi people.
- Encouraging the renewal of cultural and educational exchanges with other countries.

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