

DECLASSIFIED

RECEIVED IN REGISTER

31 OCT 2003

RECEIVED

Pa

From: JCR Gray

Date: 11 April 2003

cc:

PS/Mr O'Brien  
PS/Baroness Symons  
PS/Baroness Amos  
PS/PUS  
Mr Ricketts  
Mr Fry  
Mr Ehrman  
Chief Clerk  
Mr Oakden  
Hds SSU, NENAD,  
MED, Press Office  
Special Advisers

Personnel Directorate

PS/PUS  
Private Secretary

RECEIVED  
10/11

#### BAGHDAD: PREPARING TO OPEN

1. Given the speed of events in Baghdad, Ministers may wish to have a note of our preparations to set up a mission in Baghdad.

#### Legal and institutional issues

2. We recommend that in the early stages the mission should be known simply as "The British Office, Baghdad". But as it becomes clear what kind of government is emerging we shall need to put the mission on a more regular footing. The most recent precedents are Kabul and Kosovo.
3. In Kabul, we initially opened as the 'Office of the British Representative'. There was no "accreditation" of our Representative and his and his office's status were ambiguous, as there was no accepted authority with whom we had government-to-government dealings in Afghanistan. The Bonn Agreement invested sovereignty in the Interim Authority and created an Interim Administration. We then renewed diplomatic relations with Afghanistan, as represented by the IA, promoting the Office to a full Embassy, headed by a Charge.
4. In Kosovo, UNMIK did allow the establishment of foreign missions (called "Liaison Offices"), and even issued a regulation to set up a framework for them, on the

DECLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED  
**DECLASSIFIED**

understanding that such relations could not be handled through embassies in Belgrade. They were given some privileges and immunities by UNMIK, even though they did not have diplomatic status.

5. Assuming that by the time we wish to establish a diplomatic representation in Baghdad, and Mr Segar's team get there, there is still no generally recognised Government, the occupying powers will not legally be able to consent to the establishment of diplomatic relations or permanent diplomatic missions. But missions on the Kabul or Kosovo models should still be able to carry out most of the functions of conventional embassies.

**Physical infrastructure**

6. The arrangements set out in Mr Collecott's submission of 21 March (attached) remain on course. A four-man advance party, led by Mr Segar, are ready to move rapidly to Kuwait and then Baghdad as soon as the security situation permits (on which SSU will submit separately). The containers which will constitute their living quarters and offices for the first few weeks are parked in Kuwait, along with our four protected vehicles, the tanker vehicle and a trailer carrying assorted supplies; the team are equipped with NBC kits and have Kuwaiti visas.
7. By early May we should be able to begin work on the prefabricated ("flat pack") embassy. 12 staff should be able to move in by the third week of June, and up to a further 32 (FCO and OGD) by the end of July. This will provide a medium term base while we work out what to do with the old chancery building and residence, now said to be in an advanced state of disrepair. When permanent quarters are found, the flat pack embassy will be demolished in sections, returned to the UK and refurbished for use elsewhere.

**Security**

8. Before Mr Segar's team can be despatched safely we shall need to:
  - ensure, as close as possible to the time of their arrival, that the Baghdad compound is cleared of mines and unexploded ordnance; and install razor wire around the perimeter. The MOD have agreed to undertake this, and to provide a preliminary security needs assessment;
  - ensure Mr Segar's convoy can be protected en route from Kuwait to Baghdad. The MOD have agreed that the Army should do this;
  - deploy the agreed RMP Close Protection team to guard the FCO staff in Baghdad. The 13-man team is ready to go at 72 hours' notice;
  - provide armoured cars for the Embassy staff and CP team. The four vehicles have already been delivered to Kuwait, and will transport Mr Segar's party to Baghdad;

**DECLASSIFIED**

# DECLASSIFIED

- have confirmation that the military action is over and that the situation in Baghdad is calm.
- 9. This last point will require a difficult judgement of risk. Even after open hostilities are over, there will remain a continuing threat of terrorist action or reprisals. British representatives in Baghdad could well be the target of violent protest and organised or individual attacks. We clearly cannot put our staff into a situation where we cannot fulfil our duty of care. We shall therefore need an MOD/Assessments Staff assessment conclusion that the situation is calm enough in the city as a whole, not just in the area immediately surrounding our compound, for Mr Segar's party and their CP team to travel.

## Compound perimeter

10. Once Mr Segar has arrived, we shall also need to secure the compound perimeter. In most posts perimeter security is provided by a combination of the local police, local security guards and CCTV. It is unlikely that there will be any Iraqi authority in a position to provide formal diplomatic protection. So we shall need to provide our own for at least the initial period.
11. The perimeter of the four-acre site is long and would need 30 guards at any one time (ie a total of 100 on 8-hour shifts). We do not know enough about the condition of the perimeter wall to establish whether it is likely to provide effective protection. It does not have CCTV, and the equipment we are providing for Phase 2 will protect only the flat pack building. The need is therefore for guards to provide the first layer of protection by securing and patrolling the perimeter of the compound on a 24-hour basis. The RMP team will be armed and will provide close protection; but they cannot patrol the perimeter.
12. We have discounted either seeking help from the US military or placing a contract with a private security company, each, for differing reasons, being politically unacceptable. Two real options remain:
  - Iraqi locally-engaged guards. It might in the medium term be possible to recruit via the local staff whom we employed before 1991. But in the immediate term it would be difficult to recruit Iraqis in whom we could have the necessary degree of confidence. The only realistic alternative would be
  - the Army. We have discussed with MoD the possibility of the Army's deploying to Baghdad. They understand the task and are considering it. But they will take some persuasion to redeploy to Baghdad from the south what would in effect be a full company, even for a short deployment (and the cost to the FCO will be high).
13. In the longer term we will post a UK-based Overseas Security Manager. Work on identifying a suitable candidate has begun.

DECLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED  
DECLASSIFIED

Staffing

14. In addition to Mr Segar's four-man 'start-up' team, Personnel Directorate are identifying a pool of staff of all grades who would be willing to serve in Baghdad in the medium-longer term. The aim is to deploy staff on 1 year tours, to avoid the rapid and disruptive turnover experienced in the early days of our redeployment to Kabul.

Parliament and the media

15. There will be a lot of interest in the opening of the new office. Press Office are discussing coverage with media networks and are preparing a detailed media strategy for maximising positive coverage of the opening. We are now working up lines on the timing and scale of our opening, and the comparison with other coalition members. We are also looking at the possibility of a BBC documentary.



JCR GRAY

RESTRICTED  
DECLASSIFIED