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Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

Sir Michael Jay KCMG

The Permanent Under Secretary of State

Telephone:

Facsimile:

E-mail:

www.fco.gov.uk

Sir Andrew Turnbull KCB CVO
Cabinet Secretary
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS

22 April 2003

Dear Andrew,

**IRAQ: UK SUPPORT FOR THE OFFICE FOR RECONSTRUCTION
AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE (ORHA)**

1. At our meeting last Wednesday, I briefed Permanent Secretary colleagues on the Ministerial decision that we should provide wide ranging support to ORHA in its efforts to take forward the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. I am writing now with more details of what will be needed, and the practical arrangements we are making to allow for rapid deployment of volunteers from across the public service.

Background

2. As background on ORHA and its importance to the UK, I enclose a copy of a minute sent by the Foreign Secretary to the Prime Minister on 15 April and the response from No 10 of 17 April. In brief, the Prime Minister believes that our role in humanitarian aid and in the reconstruction of Iraq should be commensurate with our contribution to the military phase of the conflict. ORHA will play an essential role in ensuring that the military successes achieved by the Coalition are carried over into the post-war humanitarian and reconstruction effort, and the Prime Minister strongly agrees that we should increase significantly the level of political and practical support we provide.

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Requirement

3. The immediate need now is for international advisers to support ORHA in its work with the existing Iraqi administration based in Baghdad. The goal is to support the rapid development of Iraqi capacity, and to enable ORHA to hand on responsibility to a newly created Iraqi Interim Authority as soon as possible. There may also be roles to be filled with ORHA's representation in the Iraqi regions.
4. As you will know from wide coverage in the media of the situation in Iraq, the humanitarian and reconstruction challenges are acute. So far, the only teams to be anywhere close to fully staffed are those which will be working with the Treasury and the Agriculture Ministry (the Australians have taken a lead on the latter). I am sure that the UK, with its internationally respected tradition of public service, is uniquely placed to play a leading role in the reconstruction of Iraq's ability to govern itself.
5. We are now in the process of defining the assistance we can provide. I attach a list of some initial priority areas, based on advice from UK secondees in ORHA – no more detailed assessment will be possible until ORHA is firmly established with the Iraqi ministries in Baghdad. The list is divided into three groups of priorities. But Ministers would like to see UK secondees coming forward from all three groups rather than treat them sequentially.
6. In all cases, those seconded will be entering a fast moving and uncertain environment. The situation in Iraq - and ORHA as an organisation - are evolving fast as events unfold. The key to a successful secondment will be enthusiasm, personal impact, resilience, flexibility and the ability to take a wide, top-down view of policy and priorities. The ability to deploy quickly is also essential: ideally, we want the first volunteers to reach Baghdad by around 5 May to allow them to help shape ORHA's work and approach from the start. We expect secondments to last between three and six months, depending on the requirements of ORHA and the Iraqi Ministry concerned.
7. I hope you will take a broad view in looking for volunteers. Besides offering to send officials from central Departments, you might consider suggesting secondment of officials on your books but not currently employed, or consultants with a successful record of working with your Department. I hope you will also consider drawing people from your wider pool of stakeholders – I would, for example, welcome volunteers from eg police authorities, quangos or NHS trusts.

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8. In all cases, enthusiasm and personal qualities are likely to be just as important as specific expertise. I would add that the challenges of working on the international effort in Iraq are likely to offer valuable developmental experience to people from any part of the public service.

Administrative arrangements

9. Departments should work on the basis that they will continue to bear salary costs for seconded officials. Discussions are continuing on how other costs (allowances, travel costs) should be met and how payment will be made.
10. Once inside Iraq, staff will become part of ORHA, and their accommodation, messing etc will be undertaken by the central ORHA structure provided by the US. Clearly, we will not deploy seconded staff until ORHA, including Major General Tim Cross, the deputy head provided by the UK, have confidence that it is safe to do so. Conditions in Iraq are likely to be austere, especially before the arrival of the logistic support to be provided by US contractors. These hardships will be compensated by an allowance package now being finalised by the FCO, based on provision being made for staff posted to the reopened British Embassy in Baghdad.
11. I would be grateful if colleagues could now set in hand urgent arrangements to identify possible volunteers for secondment. You have agreed that CVs should be sent in the first instance to John Barker in the Talent Directorate in the Cabinet Office, side copied to _____ in the Iraq Planning Unit in the FCO (_____). They should be accompanied by a short note explaining why the applicant would like to be seconded to ORHA and what skills and experience he/she would bring. Those identified as suitable through a preliminary screening in London will be confirmed quickly with ORHA. In parallel, they will undertake the necessary vaccinations and other pre-deployment preparation. In view of the urgency, John Barker will be in touch with some Departments in the course of this week.
12. The Iraq Planning Unit, based in the FCO would be happy to answer any questions from potential secondees (please call _____ on 020 _____ or Robert Chatterton Dickson on 020 _____).
13. Copies go to Permanent Secretaries and Wednesday morning colleagues.

*Yours ever,
Michael*

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Michael Jay

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PROVISIONAL ESTIMATE OF PRIORITY AREAS FOR UK ENGAGEMENT IN ORHA ASSISTANCE TO IRAQI MINISTRIES

Recommended Priorities

Priority One (must fill)

- **Defence and Security Sector Reform, and intelligence:** key Ministries in the development of post-Saddam Iraq. The US are providing the Senior Adviser and a team of c 85 officials. A Spanish General will serve as the Deputy Adviser.

MoD are already considering contributions to specific defence sector reform projects.

- **Interior / policing / justice / prisons:** ORHA estimate of
Funding has been agreed for provision of a UK prisons expert ().

UK offered lead in 'cross-cutting group' on Internal Security.

Association of Chief Police Officers putting together scoping mission

MoD experts have visited Basra to advise on policing in the UK AOR

- **Oil ministry:** clear UK interest in involvement (commercial interest; major Iraqi oil installations in UK area of responsibility).

- **Infrastructure:** need for expertise in all the Ministries (Transport, Telecomms, Electricity, Water, Irrigation, Housing/Construction).

Important commercial dimension. Need focus on UK priority sectors

Recommendation from senior UK officers in ORHA that UK should focus on telecoms sector

Transport infrastructure also important: key Iraqi ports – Umm Qasr, Basra – are in the UK military Area of Responsibility

- **Baghdad Forum:** oversight and facilitation of international/NGO activity; shaping and influencing the international effort.

DfID have undertaken preliminary scoping visit

- **Central banking:** banking supervision and regulation; monetary policy (economists).

Priority two (should fill)

- **Finance Ministry:** Treasury "back office", accounting systems and auditing skills.
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** Deputy Liaison / Adviser position probably open to us (Senior Adviser will be a US diplomat)

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FCO (IPU) will submit separate advice to Ministers on this issue

- **Customs:** expertise needed in both systems and enforcement
- **Health systems:**

Long pre-1990 history of Iraqi co-operation with UK medical profession, including links with Royal Colleges.

Priority three (could fill)

- **Education**

Higher Education embraces Universities and scientific research (overlap with WMD programme). There is still no Senior Ministry Liaison / Adviser for this Ministry (possible opportunity for UK).

Primary education (DFID expertise widely respected)

British Council in direct contact with ORHA about possible contribution

- **Culture:** Museums, Archaeology, Heritage (British Museum, British School of Archaeology in Iraq etc?)

DCMS has provisionally identified team of five experts for early deployment.

- **Local government:** Currently under the Interior Ministry. Restructuring of central government administration of this area is likely to be necessary.

Possible UK support from Home Office, National Audit Office or local government associations?

- **Labour and Social Affairs**

Iraq Planning Unit
April 2003

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