



10 DOWNING STREET  
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From the Assistant Private Secretary

18 December 2008

Dear Richard

### **UKTI PRESENCE IN IRAQ**

Ahead of the Prime Minister's visit to Iraq, NSID (OD) on 9 December agreed the importance of stepping up investments in Iraq, and welcomed UKTI plans to appoint an international business specialist, funded by the Stabilisation Aid Fund, until the end of March, and a locally-employed member of staff in Baghdad.

During yesterday's visit to Iraq, Prime Minister Maliki told the Prime Minister that he shared his vision of a new, broad-based relationship between Iraq and UK which included expanded economic and investment ties. Prime Minister Maliki also underlined his desire to see UK companies investing in all Iraq, and not just Basra.

From what he saw in Iraq, as well as his discussions with Prime Minister Maliki and other Iraqi politicians, British military commanders and officials, and Michael Wareing, the Prime Minister believes there are opportunities in Iraq and interest from British companies that are not being exploited. He is therefore convinced of the urgent need for a significant UKTI presence in both Baghdad and Basra, both to consolidate the security gains that have already been made and to ensure that UK investors have every chance to benefit from the opportunities that are opening up in Iraq, in particular for UK oil companies during the planned May 2009 bidding round.

The Prime Minister therefore asks that ahead of your Secretary of State's visit in January, planning begins now for a long-term presence which can be in place in time to capitalise immediately on the findings of the international business specialist (and to ensure no gap in representation), and that Michael Wareing and DfID both be consulted on the appropriate requirement.

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I am copying this letter to Tom Fletcher and Jeremy Heywood (No10), Jennifer Hepker and Simon McDonald (Cabinet Office), Matthew Gould (FCO), (HMT), Matt Baugh (DfID), Rory O'Donnell (DECC), Christopher Prentice (Baghdad) and Nigel Haywood (Basra).

Yours ever



**NICK CATSARAS**

Richard Abel  
PPS/Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise  
and Regulatory Reform

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