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The Rt Hon Sir John Chilcot GCB  
Chairman  
The Iraq Inquiry  
35 Great Smith Street  
London, SW1P 3BQ

2 December 2011

*Dear John,*

## IRAQ INQUIRY PROGRESS

Thank you for your letter of 21 October updating on the progress of the Inquiry. I recognise the considerable progress the Inquiry has made, and that there is still a lot to be done.

You note that a major declassification exercise will begin in December. Responding to such requests is a labour intensive process and I know that departments will appreciate your flexibility over the 10 day target deadline. Nevertheless, I agree that we must do all we can to avoid a backlog of requests.

I will continue to do all I can to ensure the Inquiry Secretariat has sufficient resources to complete its task. Please bring to my attention any specific problems with recruiting staff. Permanent Secretaries will also want to assure themselves that their departments continue to have adequate resources devoted to assisting the Inquiry, supported at a sufficiently senior level, including being ready to respond to a heavy workload in December and the New Year.

I am copying this to Jeremy Heywood, Ursula Brennan, Simon Fraser, Mark Lowcock, Nick Macpherson, John Sawers, Iain Lobban, Jonathan Evans, Peter Fish and Paul Jenkins.

*Yours ever,*

*Gus*

**Gus O'Donnell**

