



Seventh Report  
from the

# Foreign Affairs Committee

Session 2003–04

## **Foreign Policy Aspects of the War Against Terrorism**

Response of the Secretary of State for  
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs

*Presented to Parliament  
by the Secretary of State for  
Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs  
by Command of Her Majesty  
September 2004*

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# SEVENTH REPORT FROM THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

## SESSION 2003-4

### " FOREIGN POLICY ASPECTS OF THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM"

#### RESPONSE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

##### Iraq

**1. We conclude that the violence in Iraq stems from a number of sources, including members of the former regime, local Islamists, criminal gangs and al Qaeda, with appalling consequences for the Iraqi people. However, we also conclude that the Coalition's failure to bring law and order to parts of Iraq created a vacuum into which criminal elements and militias have stepped. We recommend that the Government give all possible assistance to the Iraqi government in its efforts to step up security so that the quality of life of ordinary Iraqis may be improved and the country may continue along its path towards democracy. (Paragraph 20)**

We believe that most terrorist attacks in Iraq are the work of elements of the former regime and other disaffected Iraqis, although international jihadists have also been involved in some of the most spectacular attacks. Prime Minister Allawi is focused and determined to tackle terror and crime in Iraq. This has resonated with the Iraqi public. The international community is supporting the Iraqis in this effort. The UK continues to provide assistance to build the capacity of the Iraqi security forces, through police trainers in Iraq and Jordan as well as training and mentoring the Iraqi armed forces. Altogether more than 220,000 Iraqis are currently providing security to their fellow citizens, including 89,000 police (see response to paragraph 5). We believe that the Iraqisation of the fight against terrorists and criminals in Iraq is key to achieving peace and stability there.

**2. We conclude that insufficient numbers of troops in Iraq has contributed to the deterioration in security. We further conclude that the failure of countries other than the US and the UK to send significant troops has had serious and regrettable consequences, not only for Iraqis but also in terms of the burden placed on United Kingdom resources and perceptions of the legitimacy of operations in Iraq. We commend the Government for its work achieving diplomatic consensus around UNSCR 1546. It is disappointing that so many countries have decided against committing forces to Iraq. We recommend that the Government renew its efforts to encourage other countries, including Islamic countries, to send troops to Iraq. (Paragraph 26)**

The Multi-National Force (MNF), as mandated in UN Security Council resolution 1546 (2004), which was unanimously adopted by the Security Council, is composed of a broad bloc of 30 states assisting the Iraqi security forces to provide security. Apart from the UK and USA, this includes Italy (3000), Poland (2500), Ukraine (1600), The Netherlands (1300), Romania (700) and Japan (500). South Korea has 700 troops deployed and are sending 3000 additional troops in the coming months.

But, while it is true that the security situation is serious in some parts of Iraq, we do not accept that this is a consequence of insufficient troop numbers. Nor do we accept that this has undermined the legitimacy of our operations. Iraq Security Forces continue to grow in quantity and quality. We believe that increasing their strength is the best way to improve security in Iraq. It is also important to remember that troop levels are not the only factor in improving security, work on reconstruction and good governance is also a major factor in building consent. We continue to work with the US and others to expand the number of troop-contributing countries to Iraq. South Korea is due to send 3000 additional troops in coming months. Saudi Arabia put forward the idea of an Islamic peacekeeping force. But potential contributors have indicated that this proposal could only be considered after the MNF had withdrawn. For their part, the Iraqi Interim Government, while making clear that it would welcome contributions from new countries, has expressed reservations about accepting troops from its neighbours.

**3. We conclude that the increase in the use of private military or security companies in Iraq and Afghanistan in the last two years has added to the case for regulation of these companies, where appropriate, by the British Government. We recommend that the Government either brings forward legislation to introduce a regulatory regime for private military companies, or explain in full its reasons for not doing so.**

The Government believes that there is an important and legitimate role for the private sector in providing security in post-conflict situations, such as in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is clear that national armed forces do not always have the capacity to provide the international community with all the security required in its support for reconstruction and humanitarian assistance in many difficult security situations.

The Government agrees with the Committee that the growth in the size and importance of this industry strengthens the case for regulation of UK private military and security companies operating overseas. Developing such regulation is a complex undertaking, as set out in the Government's Green Paper "Private Military Companies", published on 12 February 2002. There are a number of difficult questions of definition in deciding how to approach such regulation. And the cost of regulation is potentially high, for both government and industry. Nonetheless, the Foreign Secretary has asked officials to undertake a further detailed review of options for regulation. The Government will keep the Committee fully informed of its thinking in this area.

**4. We conclude that the Government's condemnation of the Iranian Government's treatment of the British servicemen recently detained in Iran is wholly justified. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out what it is doing to ensure the return of the marine equipment and weapons still being held by the Iranian authorities.**

We agree with the Committee's comments about the detention of eight British servicemen by the Iranian authorities close to the Shatt al-Arab on 21 June 2004. The men were released on 24 June following intensive diplomatic efforts. We have protested to the Iranian Government about the incident. FCO and MOD Ministers and the British Ambassador in Tehran have pressed the Iranian authorities to return the boats and equipment, which they continue to hold. We are continuing a dialogue with the Iranians on this issue.

**5. We commend the Government for its work assisting the formation of the Iraqi security forces. However, we conclude that the Iraqi police and army remain a long way from being able to maintain security. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out what it regards as the minimum and optimum number of Iraqi armed forces, police, Civil Defence Corps and border police; what is the timetable envisaged for achieving these numbers; and what is being done to meet that timetable. (Paragraph 41)**

Based on Multi-National Security Transition Command Iraq (MNSTC-I) figures, over 200,000 Iraqis are currently providing security to their fellow citizens. The projected manning requirement for the Iraqi Armed Forces which includes the New Iraqi Army, National Guard (formerly Iraqi Civil Defence Corps), Intervention Force, Special Ops Force, Air Force and Coastal Defence Force is 77,203. Currently 59,245 are on duty of which 45,151 have been trained with a target of fully operational capability by April 2005.

The Ministry of Interior Forces projected manning requirement which includes the Iraqi Police Service, Civil Intervention Force, Emergency Response Unit and Department of Border Enforcement is 111,346. Currently 99,356 are on duty of which 47,225 have been trained with a target of 95% operational capability of the IPS and 100% capability of the Border Police by April 05.

Assisting the Iraqis to improve the security environment everywhere remains a priority for the UK and we are making a significant contribution to the establishment of the Iraqi Security Forces and the development of capacity, capability and credibility. Sole responsibility for handling security in Iraq will rest with the Iraqi Security Forces as and when they have the capability to take it on. This is likely to be a rolling programme beginning in the least troublesome areas, scheduled to begin by December 2004.

Iraqi Police Service (IPS): Over 100 British police officers are involved in training, mentoring and advisory roles with the Iraqi Police Service in Baghdad, across the south of Iraq and at the Jordan International Police Training Academy. UK support to the police effort is one of the major planks of our security sector reform strategy in Iraq and essential to civilian primacy in security matters. There is an extensive

and accelerated police training programme for both existing and newly recruited police officers and further specialist courses are underway in the areas of public order and criminal intelligence. In addition a 29-strong team of police monitors/mentors have deployed across MND SE to act in an advisory, training and mentoring role to the IPS within individual police stations in the four southern governorates.

Iraqi Armed Forces and National Guard: Up to a battalion of UK military provides a significant contribution to training and mentoring the Iraqi Security Forces in the South. The UK is also engaged in supporting the headquarters of the Iraqi Armed Forces, as well as providing a number of UK civilian mentors in the Iraqi Ministry of Defence. Further UK military personnel are also involved in the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team that is leading efforts to establish the new Iraqi Armed Forces. The UK also led the effort to establish the Iraqi Coastal Defence Force, command of which was handed over to the Iraqis in June 2004.

The Iraqi National Guard (formerly ICDC): UK forces in Multi-National Division (South East) (MND (SE)) have raised, trained and equipped 5 battalions in MND (SE) which are now operational. A sixth battalion is currently in training.

The UK operates in an advisory and mentoring capacity to the Iraqi Correctional Service across MND (SE). This commitment includes the continued provision of three Senior UK Prisons Advisors (two of whom are already in Iraq) to work in an advisory capacity; five prison mentors to oversee the prisons across MND (SE) (who will deploy in September 2004); and three Military Provost staff in a mentoring capacity.

**6. We recommend that the Government set out in its response to this Report its understanding of how the United Kingdom's role in Iraq has altered following the transfer of sovereignty and the signing into law of provisions for emergency measures. (Paragraph 43)**

The handover of authority to a sovereign Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) on 28 June 2004 and the dissolution of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) marked a new era in relations between the UK and Iraq symbolised in the establishment of full diplomatic relations. The British Embassy in Baghdad opened on 28 June 2004 and will have around 100 UK-based staff, more than half of whom will be civilian advisers to the IIG. There are also British Offices in Basrah in the south and Kirkuk, northern Iraq. There will be over 50 civilian advisers in the Basrah Office, helping the local Iraqi authorities with training and reconstruction. The 30-nation Multi-National Force (MNF) remains in Iraq at the request of the IIG as mandated by United Nations Security Council resolution 1546 (2004). The UK will continue to contribute to the MNF for as long as the Iraqis request its presence. The mandate of the MNF will be reviewed in June 2005 by the UN Security Council, or earlier if requested by the IIG.

**7. We are very concerned that key information on intelligence and on alleged human rights violations by British personnel was withheld from senior FCO**

**officials and from Ministers. We welcome the assurances given by the Permanent Under-Secretary and we recommend that in its response to this Report the FCO set out in detail what measures have been put in place to ensure that sensitive or important information is (a) shared between Departments of State as appropriate, (b) always passed to an appropriate senior official level in the FCO and (c) always put to Ministers if of policy or presentational significance. (Paragraph 54)**

The Committee has raised the issue of the intelligence assessment that the 45-minute claim in the Government's 2002 dossier related only to battlefield weapons, and why it was known to the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence shortly after the publication of the dossier, but not to the Permanent Under-Secretary at the FCO or the Foreign Secretary until June 2003.

The term "weapons of mass destruction" is understood to include nuclear, biological and chemical weapons regardless of their means of delivery. It was therefore accurate to use this description in the September dossier, particularly since it was clear from the dossier that the Government did not believe that Iraq possessed nuclear weapons and the term in this instance could only cover biological and chemical weapons.

It was not until June 2003, at the time of the inquiry chaired by Lord Hutton into the circumstances surrounding the death of Dr David Kelly, that there was increased interest in the exact detail of what the intelligence had described. It was only at this point that it became apparent that additional detail relating to the intelligence should be more widely shared.

When he appeared before the Committee in June, the Permanent Under-Secretary in the FCO outlined measures in place to ensure that such information was, in future, shared between the MOD and the FCO. These measures are fully in place.

Information on alleged human rights violations was not withheld from senior FCO officials and from Ministers. A report of the meeting with the ICRC on 26 February 2004 was sent to London by telegram on 27 February 2004 (within 24 hours). It was distributed at official level to the private offices of FCO Ministers. A copy of the ICRC report had already been passed to Permanent Joint Headquarters and following initial enquiries by FCO officials, they confirmed that investigations had already been launched into allegations involving UK forces. The Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Adam Ingram, was made aware of the ICRC report in February. He had already been aware for some months of two substantive issues raised in respect of UK forces and of the action taken. The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr Rammell, discussed concerns arising from the report with the President of the ICRC, Dr Kellenberger, during their meeting on March 18 2004. He raised ICRC concerns with FCO officials on his return to London and was satisfied by the assurances that investigations were already underway into allegations against UK forces.

The Service Police investigates all allegations or suspicions of activity of a criminal nature by UK forces where appropriate. This will continue to be the case. The FCO will continue to work closely with the MOD to ensure that FCO senior officials and Ministers are kept up to date with serious allegations of human rights violations or investigations involving UK forces. All ICRC reports will be distributed on diplomatic as well as military channels. The FCO and MOD have nominated ICRC representatives in Baghdad and Basrah. Our mission in Geneva will continue to work closely with the ICRC on these issues.

**8. We conclude that the provision of basic services in Iraq is not yet satisfactory and that the failure to meet Iraqi expectations, whether realistic or not, risks damaging the credibility of the United Kingdom in Iraq and Iraqi goodwill towards it. We recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government set out the current level of water and electricity provision, the targets for the coming year, and what steps it is taking to achieve these targets. We further recommend that the Government set out what steps it is taking following the handover of sovereignty in the Basrah area to assist reconstruction efforts and to ensure Iraqi involvement in these efforts, together with an update on the disbursement of funds pledged to Iraq. (Paragraph 64)**

Power generation is currently between 4500 to 5000 MW per day with a national daily supply average of between 10 and 12 hours. Electricity production is now forecast to reach 6,000 MW by January 2005. On 17 August 2004, the first new generator plant since 1976 came on stream providing 40 MW of electricity to Maysan Governorate. Several major rehabilitation schemes are on course to deliver new capacity by the end of 2004, including 325MW in Kirkuk and 300 MW in Baghdad.

In Basrah, the water supply situation remains difficult but is better than before the 2003 conflict. Major infrastructure work (mainly US funded) is planned over the next year. DFID has discussed with the UN the concerns noted in paragraph 56 of the Committee's report. The provision of washing water to Basrah, via the sweet water canal was one of the areas of greatest concern. (Drinking water for the people of Basrah is generally supplied separately by bottle or tanker.) The canal was poorly constructed and extensive rebuilding will begin later this year. In the meantime, remedial works have been carried out and a contingency supply of three days water for Basrah has been established. In Baghdad civil engineering work has been completed at three wastewater treatment plants. In some areas reduced electricity supply over summer (peak demand) is likely to impact on the water supply system. UN is operating water tankers to meet any shortfalls and supplying water purification tablets.

One of DFID's main priorities in southern Iraq has been to restore essential infrastructure: projects totalling more than £31m have been implemented for this purpose, using Iraqi suppliers of goods and services wherever possible.



After 28 June, DFID's role in the south has evolved in view of the large resources which are becoming available for reconstruction from the USA, Japan, and multilateral trust funds. A key priority is to strengthen Iraqi capacity to ensure that these resources are well used. DFID is undertaking a £20.5m two-year capacity building programme for the four southern Governorates to help them manage these flows to meet local priorities. In addition, a DFID advisory team is ready to provide technical and sectoral advice to link policy makers and contractors appointed by the new US "Project Contracting Office" (PCO) with Iraqi policy-makers. DFID is also providing a "Project Continuity Team" to complete more than 250 infrastructure projects in southern Iraq started by the Coalition Provisional Authority; and is making available up to £10m to respond to any critical failures in essential services or breaks in the chains of essential supplies.

At the Madrid Conference in October 2003, the UK made a total financial commitment towards Iraq's reconstruction of £544 million for the three years from April 2003 to March 2006. Of this commitment, the Government disbursed £251.9 million on humanitarian and reconstruction work in Iraq during the financial year 2003/4. This included expenditure by DFID (£209.3 million) as well as by other Government Departments. £7.4 million had, in addition, been disbursed by DFID in the previous financial year on pre-conflict humanitarian preparation.

Of the \$1bn committed by donors to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq, around three quarters has now been deposited. DFID has contributed £70 million: £40 million to the World Bank and £30 million to the UN. The UN trust fund has agreed 27 projects worth a total of \$323 million, including the rehabilitation of water and sanitation systems (\$21 million), emergency power supply (\$12 million), and the rehabilitation of two gas power stations (\$43 million). The World Bank has committed \$100 million for emergency education projects, of which \$40 million is for school textbooks and \$60 million for a school repair and rehabilitation project. It is also developing a set of rural and urban infrastructure rehabilitation projects.

The \$18.5bn pledged by the United States at Madrid has been committed to projects throughout Iraq, many of which have already begun. Japan, as the second largest donor to Iraq, pledging \$4.9bn, has initiated a number of projects, including the rehabilitation of three power stations (\$160m) and the provision of sanitation equipment (\$57m). Pledges made by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund at Madrid will be committed once a sustainable fiscal policy has been established.

**9. We note the progress made by the Iraqi judiciary and commend the Government for its role in assisting this. We conclude that the judiciary, and in particular the Iraqi Special Tribunal, will continue to require international assistance. We recommend that the Government provide in its response to this Report an update on what the Government is doing to support the Iraqi Special Tribunal, the establishment of fair systems of criminal and civil justice in Iraq, and the new Iraqi government's efforts to ensure that human rights are respected. (Paragraph 70)**

We agree that assisting the judiciary to take its proper place in the life of Iraq should be a priority for the Government. DFID have allocated £2m for training judges, lawyers and prosecutors.

The FCO has allocated £1.3 for building the capacity of the Iraqi Special Tribunal, mostly in the field of training of personnel. The bulk of this money will be spent on a Forensic Training and Internship Programme with the rest going towards training for IST judges, prosecutors, defence lawyers and court administration staff.

**10. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government outline how it plans to assist economic reform following the handover of sovereignty. We further recommend that the Government set what progress has been made towards an IMF programme for Iraq and agreement with Iraq's various creditors, as well as the anticipated timeframe for agreement. (Paragraph 74)**

DFID's aid programme includes £3 million of technical support to the Iraqi Government on economic reform. This involves strengthening Iraqi capacity in budget implementation, support to the Macroeconomic Unit in the Ministry of Finance, advice on the design of a sustainable fiscal policy, state-owned enterprise reform and the social impact of reform, and support for the negotiation of an IMF programme. The Iraqi Government is in active discussion with the IMF with the intention of the IMF Board agreeing a programme on Emergency Post-Conflict Assistance. This would be followed by a higher-tier stand-by arrangement for Iraq in the New Year. A debt deal remains on-track for the end of 2004. The Iraqis are in discussion with the Paris Club and other major creditor nations to achieve this.

**11. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government provides full details of the assistance it is providing the Iraqi oil industry as well as its efforts to assist economic diversification. (Paragraph 78)**

The UK Government has recently handed an outline Code of Practice for the Iraqi oil sector to the Iraqi Ministry of Oil. The code includes guidance on best practice in the fields of Health, Safety and Environment, Human Resources, Contracts and Procurement, and Business Ethics and Transparency, and was produced by industry experts working closely with the Iraqi Ministry of Oil. Additional work on fiscal and regulatory frameworks for the oil industry is also being prepared. Our work with the Iraqi Government on economic reform already mentioned aims specifically to create some of the conditions necessary for encouraging the investment that will lead to the diversification of the economy that we all see as desirable.

**12. We are concerned at reports of irregularities in the handling of the Development Fund for Iraq. We recommend that the Government inform us of its understanding of these allegations and the role played by the United Kingdom in managing the Fund. (Paragraph 80)**

The main issues over handling of the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI) stem from the report, undertaken by KPMG acting as auditors on behalf of the International

Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB), into the receipts and payments of the DFI during the period 22 May to December 31 2003. However, the main conclusion of the auditors' report was that the DFI Statement of Cash Receipts and Payment "presents fairly, in all material respects, the receipts and payments of the DFI". The one qualification to this was that not all export sales of oil had been fully reported because of the problem of smuggling.

Within the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the DFI was managed by the Comptroller's Office. The Comptroller's office received requests for payment from the DFI in order to meet the needs of the Iraqi Budget, and made disbursements on the basis of directions from the authorised DFI signatories (made up of the CPA Administrator, Administrator's Deputy and Comptroller). No UK personnel or secondees to the CPA served in the Comptroller's Office or was an authorised signatory over the DFI account. The UK was a voting member of the DFI Program Review Board, which assessed and approved expenditure proposals for the DFI. Other members of the Review Board were representatives of Iraqi Government ministries, the US and Australia. In its voting the UK aimed always to support the intentions of the Iraq Ministries of Finance and Planning and to promote the principles of international competitive tendering. The Government is aware of the IAMB's interest in the use of non-competitive bidding procedures for some contracts funded from the DFI and awaits their report.

**13. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out its understanding of the legal position of foreign contractors and subcontractors working in Iraq, now that the CPA has been dissolved, including any plans to waive immunity from Iraqi legal process. (Paragraph 85)**

Foreign civilian contractors working in Iraq fall under Iraqi jurisdiction, unless they enjoy immunity under CPA Order Number 17. The legal position of such contractors is as set out in Paragraph 84 of this Report. Private Security Companies must comply with all CPA Orders, Regulations, Memoranda, and any implementing instructions or regulations governing their activities. CPA Memorandum 17 sets out a number of such regulations, including the requirement for private security companies to obtain a licence from the Iraqi authorities.

**14. We are concerned that the documents given to the United Kingdom Government relating to the Oil-for-Food Programme corruption allegations name a small number of United Kingdom individuals and entities. We are glad to have been assured by the FCO that none of the individuals or entities is connected with the United Kingdom Government. We recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government provide further information on the progress of the inquiry into allegations of corruption in the Oil-for-Food programme, including any further information on United Kingdom involvement.**

The Independent Inquiry into the allegations of corruption in the Oil-for-Food Programme, appointed by the UN Secretary-General, continues. The Government

continues to co-operate fully. On 9 August 2004, the Independent Inquiry Committee published an interim report, which provided information on the Programme and the status of the inquiry, including its terms of reference and staffing details (<http://www.iic-offp.org/documents/IICSR.pdf>). The interim report only describes the initiation and early progress of the inquiry and includes no substantive conclusions on the allegations of corruption. We await subsequent reports, which are expected to address the role of UN staff and contractors in the management of the Programme, and the allegations of corruption surrounding certain UN personnel and entities that engaged in business with Iraq under the Programme.

The relevant UK authorities have assessed all the documents received by the Government at this time and decided that there is currently insufficient information to mount a criminal investigation. The authorities will continue to assess any documents relating to allegations of corruption by UK nationals or entities, or non-UK nationals or entities based in the UK, and will take the appropriate action. One UK company that had contracts under the Programme declared in a statement to the London Stock Exchange on 22 July 2004 that prices payable on certain contracts were uplifted by an aggregate of £4.2m. The company could not rule out the possibility that sums may have been returned to Iraq.

**15. We commend the Government's efforts to address the unemployment problem in Basrah. However, we conclude that considerable further progress is required. We recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government set out what steps it is taking in the Basrah area following the handover of sovereignty to assist job creation and economic regeneration. (Paragraph 92)**

A recent (March – end May 2004) survey undertaken in collaboration with the Iraq Central Statistical Office suggests that previous estimates of unemployment may be overstated, particularly now in the light of military and reconstruction spending and some re-emergence of the private sector as the removal of sanctions takes effect. The survey uses ILO related definitions to estimate that unemployment overall in Iraq stands at around 25%. This varies by gender and region with the south generally suffering worse than the rest of the country.

We recognise that more needs to be done to help. In southern Iraq, DFID has established a "Local Governance Fund", which will provide up to £6m to generate up to 1.75m days of employment over the six-month life of the programme. This will help provide employment prior to the employment generation expected to result from other donor reconstruction programmes.

**16. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government provide the latest figure for United Kingdom personnel working with Iraqi ministries following the handover of sovereignty, including details of the timeframe of their involvement. (Paragraph 95)**

In Baghdad, there will be 35 DFID consultants working with Iraqi Ministries by the end of September (security permitting). There are 8 Ministry of Defence advisers, 23 police advisers and 3 media advisers. In Basrah there will be 30 DFID consultants by the end of September (security permitting). There are 31 police advisers, 9 prison officers/ mentors and 29 police mentors. The timeframe for the involvement of these advisers remains flexible, depending on security constraints and the scope of the work.

**17. We conclude that the process of wide-ranging consultation overseen by the UN played an important role in the formation of the interim Government on 1 June. While it is too early to judge the performance of the interim Government, its successful establishment and assumption of sovereignty on 28 June underline the importance of UN engagement in Iraq. We conclude that it is crucial that the sovereignty of the new government is respected and that foreign governments should not interfere in its decision making. (Paragraph 115)**

We agree. We welcome the return of the UN in Iraq and its vital role in the formation of the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG). Kofi Annan has appointed Ashraf Qazi, current Pakistani Ambassador to the US, as the new UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Iraq. The UN is about to deploy around 45 core staff in Iraq, once logistics are finalised. We are working with the UN and US to ensure the security of UN staff in Iraq. The UN will continue to play a significant part in the political process in Iraq, as mandated in United Nations Security Council resolution 1546 (2004). The UN helped the IIG prepare for the National Conference and continues to work with the Independent Elections Commission of Iraq to ensure successful elections in January 2005

We continue to urge the international and regional community to support the IIG. Iraqi Prime Minister, Ayad Allawi, has travelled the region to drum up political support and build upon regional security. The latest meeting of Iraq's neighbours took place in Cairo on 21 July 2004. The Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria, Jordan, Turkey and Iran were present as well as Egypt and Iraq. Lakhdar Brahimi and Javier Solana also attended. The meeting was successful with an official welcome of United Nations Security Council resolution 1546 (2004) and the transfer of power to the IIG. There were individual words of support for the IIG and pledges of cooperation. It was agreed that interior ministers should meet (possibly in Tehran) to discuss security cooperation with Iraq.

**18. We conclude that UN engagement in the political transition was critical to the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1546. However, although the unanimous adoption of the Resolution reflects improved international consensus regarding Iraq, many states continue to hold back from assisting the country. We recommend that the Government set out in its response to this Report its understanding of what security assistance will be provided to the UN to facilitate its return to the country. (Paragraph 121)**

We, the US and the UN have been working hard to elicit contributions from the international community to a UN Protection Force, so far with limited success. It now seems likely that the US and UK will have to provide the majority of the protection for the UN augmented by contributions from other countries.

**19. We conclude that it is highly desirable that elections proceed on schedule in order to foster Iraqi engagement and confidence in the political transition. However we are concerned about the impact of the security situation could have on the validity of the election process. We recommend that the Government set out in its response to the Report what plans it has, bilaterally with Iraq, and in conjunction with the US and UN, for providing security specifically for the elections. We further recommend that the Government encourage states that remain reluctant to commit troops to counter-insurgency operations in Iraq to send forces to assist with the elections. (Paragraph 127)**

We attach great importance to holding elections according to the agreed timetable and will maintain a close dialogue with the UN and the Independent Elections Commission for Iraq in order to assist where we can. We are continuing our efforts to build the capacity of the Iraqi security forces, which will have a vital role to play in ensuring security for the elections. As outlined above the UK is working with the UN and the US on the establishment of a UN protection force, which would as part of its task protect UN election staff. The UK is also continuing a dialogue with troop contributing states in the UK led Multi-National Division (South East) (MND SE) to maintain the necessary commitment of forces throughout the election period. We will continue to encourage further contributions to the MNF in Iraq from states that have hitherto been reluctant to commit troops.

**20. We conclude that the United Kingdom Government should join with the US Government to make clear that the Iraqi government is sovereign in reality as well as in name. (Paragraph 130)**

We agree and we have. We are in regular discussions with the Iraqi Government, US and UN officials, as well as regional governments, to ensure that the Iraqi Interim Government receives the support, advice and assistance required to enable it to fulfil its obligations to the Iraqi people by leading the political process and ensuring security in the run-up to elections in January 2005. We are reassured by the recognition that regional organisations, such as the Arab League, the OIC, EU and OPEC, have given the Iraqi Interim Government.

**21. We recommend that the Government set out in its response to this Report what lessons have been learned from the mistreatment of detainees and what safeguards are being put in place to prevent a recurrence of such appalling incidents. (Paragraph 138)**

*In response to the Abu Ghraib allegations we have been in constant dialogue with the US about detention policy. The Government condemned the publication of the*

*Daily Mirror photos at the time.* The origin of the fakes is the subject of a Royal Military Police investigation.

The Government has made clear that there is no evidence of systematic human rights abuses by members of the UK Armed Forces in Iraq either at detention facilities or more widely. The MOD response to the various reports of Amnesty International was placed in the Library of the House of Commons on 2 July 2004.

As the Response makes clear, the UK Armed Forces in Iraq are subject to UK criminal law and where there is evidence of wrongdoing this is investigated by the Service Police. The Service Police has investigated 18 incidents involving Iraqis detained by the UK Armed Forces at the time of the incident. Six of those investigations have already concluded that no crime had taken place. MOD regularly reviews its practices in the light of incidents, both on the ground and from a policy perspective, but where there is evidence of potential criminal acts it is for the courts to hold individuals to account in the first instance. Although it is not possible to pre-empt the outcome of the judicial process, we believe that where mistreatment is demonstrated to have occurred this will be because personnel have acted outside existing detainee handling policy. But if evidence comes to light that our policies can be improved, this will happen.

**22. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government inform us of how many Iraqi detainees or prisoners of war it held on 28 June and on the most recent date for which figures are available, including details of their status and location and the likely future of their detention. (Paragraph 141)**

The authority of the UK to hold PoWs expired on 28 June 2004. The two PoWs for whom the UK had been the detaining power prior to 28 June remained in US custody until their transfer to the Central Criminal Court of Iraq. On 28 June, we held 49 security internees and no criminal detainees. On 1 September, the UK did not hold any PoWs, 27 security internees and no criminal detainees.

Internees held by the UK are now held at the Divisional Temporary Detention Facility (DTDF) near Shaibah. Within the compound individuals are free to move around as they wish. They can exercise freely and can practise their religion as they wish. Internees are entitled to two visits per week, from whomsoever they choose be it family members or lawyers. They are given halal food three times per day. If they request a change to the menu for religious reasons this can be accommodated and they are provided with bottled fresh water.

Individuals are only interned for as long as this is necessary for imperative reasons of security. Standard Operating Procedures require that UK MNF-I contact nominated persons within 24 hours, to inform them of the internment of their relative. A review is conducted at the 10, 28 and 90 day points (and every 90 days thereafter) to determine whether continued internment is necessary. Currently a panel of civilian and military officers in theatre conduct this review. Procedures are in place to allow internees to make representations against their continued internment. We are in the process of establishing an Internee Review Board in

London which, in addition to the arrangements in theatre, will automatically review cases at the six-month point.

**23. We recommend that in its response to this Report, the Government set out what arrangements have been put in place regulating the presence of United Kingdom forces in Iraq, including details of powers of arrest and rules of engagement. We further recommend that the Government set out why it has not reached a separate status of forces agreement with the Iraqi government. (Paragraph 151)**

UN Security Council resolution 1546 (2004), with associated letters from Prime Minister Allawi and the US Secretary of State, Colin Powell, provides the legal basis for the UK armed forces' continuing presence in Iraq after 28 June 2004. The resolution recognised the need for international support to restore stability and security in Iraq, and provided for the continued presence of the Multi-National Force (MNF) in Iraq at the request of the incoming Interim Government of Iraq. The request and its acceptance are expressed in the correspondence from Allawi and Powell to the President of the Security Council annexed to the resolution.

The UK government has not concluded a separate status of forces agreement (SOFA) with the Interim Iraqi Government (IIG). The powers of the IIG are set out in an Annex to the Transitional Administrative Law (the law for the administration of Iraq during the transitional period). The Annex to the Transitional Administrative Law places restrictions on the IIG's right to conclude international agreements during the Interim Period which prevent it entering into a SOFA. Under Article 59 of the Transitional Administrative Law the elected Transitional Government will have the power to negotiate a SOFA.

The current position is that Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 17 covers the status of the MNF and MNF personnel in Iraq. CPA Order Number 17 was originally made during the occupation period on 27 June 2003, and gave certain privileges and immunities to Coalition personnel operating in Iraq. CPA Order Number 17 (Revised) was made exactly a year later on 27 June 2004. It continues the privileges and immunities in the earlier CPA Order 17 and also covers new areas which would normally be covered in a SOFA such as:

Free movement

Taxation, customs and excise

Goods, accommodation and services

The use of facilities (including the Green Zone – now known as the International Zone)

Passports and visas (entry and departure requirements)

CPA Orders are a part of Iraqi law and will be applied by the Iraqi Courts.

There are two categories of detainees in Iraq. Firstly, there are "security internees" who can be interned for imperative reasons of security within the mandate given to the MNF by UNSCR 1546. The minimum procedures applicable to their



internment are set out in CPA Memorandum 3 (see our response to Conclusion 22 for the review processes in place).

The second category are criminal detainees. CPA Memorandum 3 gives the MNF the right to apprehend persons who are suspected of having committed criminal acts and who are not considered to be security internees. Under the terms of CPA Memorandum 3 criminal detainees apprehended by the MNF must be handed over to the Iraqi authorities as soon as reasonably practicable. The Iraqi authorities may ask the MNF to confine criminal detainees in safe and secure detention facilities, subject to security and capacity considerations.

As Iraqi police capability has developed, the detention of criminal detainees by the UK has become increasingly rare. There have been no such detainees in UK custody for many weeks.

The Rules of Engagement under which the British Armed Forces in Iraq operate fully reflect our obligations under relevant domestic and international law to ensure minimum use of force to achieve military objectives. However, it would be inappropriate to publish the Rules of Engagement, since to do so would entail making public detailed information about how our forces operate which could jeopardise future operations.

**24. We recommend that the Government set out in its response to this Report what steps it is taking to ensure that there is a sufficient body of expertise in the United Kingdom to enable better communication with the Arab and Islamic world. (Paragraph 157)**

The FCO is keen to ensure that there are enough relevant academic specialists in British universities to maintain understanding of the Arab and Islamic world and good communication with it. There is a particular need for linguists with a capability in Arabic and other languages of the Islamic world. The FCO is currently discussing with the DfES how these objectives might best be achieved.

**25. We recommend that the Government set out in response to this Report what steps it is taking following the handover of sovereignty in Iraq to ensure the safety of United Kingdom personnel. (Paragraph 164)**

The Government is taking all steps possible to ensure the safety of our personnel in Iraq. We have provided secure compounds for our missions in Baghdad and Basrah, which are located in the "International Zones" in both cities. The missions are guarded by trained Armor Group personnel. Outside the international zones, our staff travels in armoured vehicles under the protection of trained personnel from Control Risks Group. There is a dedicated security manager at each post. The FCO Overseas Security Adviser visits both posts regularly and his recommendations have been put into effect. Our one-man mission in Kirkuk is located in a well-guarded US compound.

**26. We recommend that the Government update us in its response to this Report on the current status of United Kingdom representation in Iraq. We further recommend that the Government inform us of its understanding of the constraints imposed by the security situation on the operation of United Kingdom personnel, including its ability to move around the country. (Paragraph 165)**

The UK is represented in Iraq through our Embassy in Baghdad and our Consulates-General in Basrah and Kirkuk. The Embassy has 105 staff, including DFID consultants and police and defence advisers. The Consulate-General in Basrah consists of 94 staff, including police and prison advisers and DFID consultants. The mission in Kirkuk is a one-man post. Constraints on the movements of UK personnel around Iraq vary according to the region and the security situation at the time. When outside the "International Zones" in Baghdad and Basrah all UK staff travels in armoured vehicles under the protection of Control Risks Group. Our missions carry out regular assessments of the local security situation before making decisions on staff travel. In making such decisions, the safety of staff is paramount.

**27. We conclude that the alternative to a positive outcome in Iraq may be a failed state and regional instability. It is therefore of the utmost importance that current problems are resolved in favour of the forces of order and that those who seek to impede Iraq's transition to a free and democratic state are defeated. (Paragraph 167)**

Our objective is a peaceful, prosperous, democratic Iraq at peace with its neighbours. We are working hard with our Iraqi and international partners to achieve that. As the Committee notes much rests on our success. We are encouraged that the overwhelming majority of the Iraqi people continue to demand a restoration of security, reconstruction and prosperity. We share their objectives and are committed to working together to achieve them.

## **Afghanistan**

**28. We conclude that the contribution being made by United Kingdom diplomatic, aid and military personnel in Afghanistan, working in challenging and dangerous conditions, is out of all proportion to their small numbers. We recommend that the Government do what it can to improve the conditions in which its personnel live and work in Afghanistan. (Paragraph 169)**

We welcome the Committee's recognition of the work and commitment of UK diplomatic, aid and military personnel in Afghanistan. Manpower levels and conditions under which personnel operate are subject to regular review. Agreement has recently been reached to fund the creation of additional FCO staff slots in the Embassy, and to improve living conditions for staff in Kabul.

**29. We conclude that it is important for Afghanistan that the presidential elections**

**planned for October 2004 should proceed, unless the United Nations judges that the level of voter registration has been so low as to damage the credibility of the process, or the security situation has deteriorated to a point where the dangers posed to human life—or the threat to voter turnout—are unacceptably high. We further conclude that the cause of democracy in Afghanistan requires that parliamentary elections be held as soon as possible after the presidential elections and we recommend that the Government offer every assistance to the Afghan and UN authorities to enable this to happen. We further recommend that in its response to this Report the Government provide a detailed breakdown of what funding for the electoral process in Afghanistan has been pledged by UN member states; and what has been delivered. (Paragraph 180)**

We welcome the holding of presidential elections in October 2004 and recognise the huge effort put in by the UN which has resulted in the registration of over 10m voters (over 40% being women). We are continuing to support both these and the parliamentary elections planned for Spring 2005. Our support includes the provision of targeted development assistance and support to such bodies as the OSCE and EU, but also the deployment of UK military assets. Figures available in August 2004 showed that over \$78m had been pledged by the international community to assist the holding of presidential elections. Of this, \$45m had been already been transferred to the UN, including the UK's contribution.

**30. The British Army has an excellent, probably unrivalled, record in sensitive patrolling of potentially hostile areas and building confidence and trust. We conclude that these are among the most important tasks for PRTs in Afghanistan. (Paragraph 191)**

We welcome the Committee's positive comments about the performance of the British Army, and agree on the importance of sensitive patrolling by Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) to build confidence and trust.

**31. We conclude that the Provincial Reconstruction Teams are one of the success stories of international engagement in Afghanistan and that their expansion should be regarded as a priority. However, there are real differences between the approaches adopted by the various PRTs as well as between Afghan perceptions of NATO's ISAF forces and those which are part of Operation Enduring Freedom. We recommend that all PRTs be placed under ISAF control as soon as possible. (Paragraph 192)**

All PRTs share a range of common activities and goals. These include helping to extend central government authority; promoting and assisting Security Sector Reform; and facilitating the provision by others of development and other assistance. But we recognise that each PRT needs to tailor the way it operates in light of local conditions. These include the prevailing security situation, the terrain, the level of socio-economic development, and the existing presence of central government and NGO and other international organisation representatives. The two UK-led PRTs (in Maimana and Mazar-e Sharif) and the UK-led Forward Support Base (also in Mazar-e Sharif) were transferred to NATO-led International Security

Assistance Force (ISAF) command on 1 July 2004. It is not possible for ISAF to cover all parts of Afghanistan. But as ISAF expansion continues, more PRTs will be brought within the ISAF chain of command.

**32. We conclude that there is little, if any, sign of the war on drugs being won, and every indication that the situation is likely to deteriorate, at least in the short term. We recommend that the Government, which is in the lead on the counter-narcotics strategy in Afghanistan, explain in its response to this Report exactly how it proposes to meet the targets of reducing opium poppy cultivation by 75 percent by 2008, and eradicating it completely by 2013. (Paragraph 204)**

As the Committee suggests, one of the reasons the UK took the lead role in co-ordinating counter narcotics (CN) activity in Afghanistan is that 95% of the heroin on UK streets comes from that country. Furthermore, the objectives of achieving long-term stability in Afghanistan and tackling its drug cultivation and trade are inextricably linked. The Government therefore remains committed to supporting the Afghan government in implementing its Afghan National Drug Control Strategy, which aims to reduce opium poppy cultivation by 70% by 2008 and to eliminate it by 2013.

We have never shied away from saying that this is a hugely complex challenge facing the international community in its support of President Karzai and the Afghan government. It will take sustained effort over time. As the Committee outlines, drugs permeate vast swathes of the Afghan economy and state. Drugs nurture warlordism and armed factionalism, fuel insurgency and seriously undermine the stability and security of Afghanistan. We do not under-estimate how enormous a challenge this remains. No other country has succeeded in overcoming so daunting a problem.

In Parliament and in other fora, we have said we fully expect a rise in levels of opium poppy cultivation when the UN Survey is published in the Autumn. This will be a salutary, if unwelcome, reminder that, as the Committee also acknowledges, the situation is unlikely to improve in the short term, even when we can point to similar trends in other countries in recent years, such as Pakistan and Thailand. And both of these were more stable countries with much lower levels of production than Afghanistan. Cultivation tends to increase, for example, as infrastructure and access to water improves. And, in Afghanistan, there are particularly serious problems regarding stability, corruption and the extension of central Afghan government control into the regions.

We welcome the Committee's acknowledgement that eradication alone, for example, cannot be the solution, linked, as it is, to the opium debt that afflicts so many Afghan farmers. If not targeted properly, eradication can have the reverse effect and encourage farmers to cultivate more poppy to pay off increased debts the following year. Instead, as the Committee sets out, the UK is working urgently with the Afghan government and international partners to implement the co-ordinated and comprehensive counter narcotics strategy that Afghanistan has in place. We consider there is no other way to address the problem.

In our role as lead co-ordinating nation, the UK is finalising agreements for joint working for the year ahead with the government of Afghanistan and her neighbours. International partners include the UN, G8, our EU partners and the European Commission, as well as the US. Work will continue to be taken forward in the following areas:

- Information campaigns: proactively pursuing in-country campaigns for all aspects of the CN strategy, as well as UK media and public diplomacy strategies; in the short term, rolling out a comprehensive messaging campaign to discourage farmers from planting opium poppy in the upcoming planting season;
- Law enforcement and interdiction: increasing support for the CN police and Afghan efforts to disrupt interdiction targets. To date, the UK-supported Afghan Special Narcotics Force (ASNF), has destroyed over 34 tonnes of opiates, 32 laboratories and made over 20 arrests;
- Eradication: working up a non-compensated, effective and sustained eradication programme for 2005 as early in the growing cycle as possible to allow farmers to replant licit crops. The UK is supporting the targeting and planning of eradication so that it is targeted in those areas where it is most likely to have a sustainable effect. This includes the lands of warlords and commanders;
- Judicial reform: improving existing CN laws, creating a fast-track CN channel within the criminal justice system to ensure a fast, fair and secure legal process and improving secure prison facilities;
- Alternative livelihoods: increasing the number of projects, encouraging donors to make more effective use of their resources at provincial level and mainstreaming CN objectives into development programmes;
- Afghanistan in its region: taking action in key neighbouring and transit countries to ensure that the opium continues to be targeted once it has left Afghanistan.

We are still in the early stages of the 10-year plan to eliminate opium poppy production. We need to continue with all strands of the CN strategy and not be deterred by short-term increases in cultivation before wider economic and law enforcement opportunities can take hold. Unlike many other precedents, the complex of opium debt, warlords, corruption and a lack of security in Afghanistan continues to hamper our ability to deliver assistance and economic reform. “Winning the war on drugs” has therefore to be seen in the wider context of the future of Afghanistan. The Government shares the Committee’s concerns and remains committed to securing overall improvements, including on counter narcotics.

We would welcome the opportunity to brief the Committee orally on the on-going work by the UK and others in this area.

**33. We conclude that improving security for the civilian population is one of the highest priority needs in Afghanistan. We recommend that the Government set out in its response to this Report what further contributions the United Kingdom will be making to improve security for the Afghan people. (Paragraph 209)**

Improvements in the everyday lives of the Afghan civilian population will be one of the measures of the success of the international community's engagement in post-conflict Afghanistan. Improving security will be a key part of this. Achieving this will require concerted effort in a number of fields. These include

- supporting ISAF expansion to help improve general security and thereby provide the environment in which the rule of law is respected;
- supporting the US-led Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)/Coalition activity to counter the threat from remaining Al-Qai'da and Taliban elements;
- supporting all aspects of Security Sector Reform, to help build Afghan institutional capacity so that it can in the future provide for its own security;
- working with Allies to ensure that the Bonn Process remains on track;
- working with development partners and the wider international donor community to deliver the socio-economic development that will contribute to wider security in Afghanistan and help remove some of the root causes of instability.

In practice, this means we will

- work with key Allies within NATO to maintain the momentum behind ISAF expansion to facilitate the assumption by ISAF of the command of an increased number of PRTs;
- continue to plan for the deployment of the UK-led HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) as announced by the Prime Minister at the Istanbul NATO Summit in June 2004, including to explore the potential that the HQ ARRC's deployment offers for unifying ISAF and OEF/Coalition activity under a single military command structure;
- look for innovative ways to support reform of the new Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police forces, ensuring that any UK interventions are sustainable and offer value for money;
- work with the Afghan authorities to support more rapid progress in Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration, an issue identified as a major concern amongst the Afghan populace;

- keep under review and tailor accordingly the UK's interventions in support of the Afghan authorities' counter-narcotics efforts, including generating international support for the Afghanistan Counter-Narcotics Strategy; and
- support the democratic process ensuring that the presidency, government and parliament that emerge from the forthcoming elections are accountable to and representative of the Afghan people.

**34. We conclude that Afghanistan's 'warlords' or commanders are both a large part of the problem and an essential part of the solution. We recommend that the Government use its good offices to assist the Afghan Transitional Administration to ensure that the political process is as inclusive as possible, while avoiding the corruption and abuses of power which have been evident in some parts of central and local government. We conclude that, until this process is complete and has become irreversible, and until the Afghan National Army has developed its own capacity, the international forces in Afghanistan must retain the option and therefore the capability of assisting the Afghan authorities to deal militarily with commanders who persist in operating outside the rule of law. (Paragraph 220)**

We agree with the Committee's assessment of the role of warlords and other commanders. Many militia leaders have retained a military capability as insurance against an uncertain political future. But the political process is on track and military solutions to conflicts are no longer acceptable. There is comfort to be gained from the number of factional and regional leaders who have recognised the need to engage in the political process, including standing in elections or registering political parties (for which they are required to distance themselves from militia forces). It remains to be seen how the power dynamic between the centre and regions develops in the post-elections period. We agree that we need to be able to assist the central government to consolidate its authority and that it is too soon to be looking towards a withdrawal of international forces in Afghanistan. As noted above, we are continuing to work with our Allies in NATO to expand ISAF's presence in Afghanistan.

**35. We conclude that the most urgent and pressing need for Afghanistan is to achieve disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. We recommend that the Government and its allies devote greater resources to achieving this goal. We further recommend that as an essential first step reliable data should be assembled on how many fighters serve with the militias, what arms they have, and to whom they are responsible; only then will the true scale of the task be fully apparent. (Paragraph 225)**

Achieving Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) in Afghanistan is both an important end in itself and an important means to an end. The Afghan people have made clear that they wish to see the military power of the local militias reduced. The UK is fully committed to supporting this process, including through funding and the provision of policy advice (see below). Inadequate progress has the potential to threaten the nascent democratic process. It is therefore vital that

undertakings given by presidential election candidates to disarm or distance themselves from operational control of militia forces are upheld. The period between the presidential and parliamentary elections must be used to make rapid advances. The establishment of strong central government control is an important pre-requisite to progress in this field, including the associated objectives related to counter-narcotics.

The international community, including the UK, is working closely with the Afghan authorities, the UN and NGOs to meet the significant challenges presented by DDR in Afghanistan. Efforts are primarily channelled in two directions. The first is to help Afghan authorities formulate the necessary policy framework for DDR to be effective, setting targets for the DDR process, and helping the Afghan authorities find an effective mixture of incentives and sanctions to achieve them. The second, at the operational level, is support to the UN's Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme (ANBP), the body created to execute the DDR process. We have contributed \$4m in financial year 2004-05, in addition to funding the programme's senior DDR adviser through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool's Afghanistan Strategy. We have also funded small arms and other weapons destruction programmes operated by the HALO Trust. In the course of its work, the ANBP has concluded that there are about 60,000 militia rather than the originally-estimated 100,000. The ANBP continues to try to refine this figure. A survey of heavy weapons conducted in July 2004 shows a total of just over 6,000 heavy weapons, of which only 1,600 were deemed to be operational. Cantonment programmes have begun in four regions, yielding a total of about 20% of the weapons surveyed.

**36. We conclude that, welcome though the Istanbul declaration of limited further support for Afghanistan is, fine communiqués and ringing declarations are no substitute for delivery of the forces and equipment which Afghanistan needs on the ground. We agree with President Karzai that the need for more resources for ISAF is urgent. There is a real danger if these resources are not provided soon that Afghanistan—a fragile state in one of the most sensitive and volatile regions of the world—could implode, with terrible consequences. We recommend that the Government impress upon its NATO allies the need to deliver on their promises to help Afghanistan before it is too late, both for the credibility of the Alliance and, more importantly, for the people of Afghanistan. (Paragraph 232)**

We agree that NATO's commitment to Afghanistan will be judged by what is deployed on the ground. We have pressed Allies for the early deployment of the promised resources to assist the Afghan authorities to provide security for the elections, and are pleased that most are either ready to deploy or already in theatre. Stage 1 ISAF expansion (the North) has been achieved. We will work with Allies to generate the momentum necessary to ensure that Stage 2 (the West) follows as quickly as possible.



## Pakistan

**37. We conclude that Pakistan is making a meaningful and welcome contribution to the war against terrorism. However, we also recognise the domestic difficulties faced by Pakistan and we are concerned that Pakistan and President Musharraf in particular are being targeted by al Qaeda as a result of their co-operation with the war against terrorism. We recommend that the Government make clear its appreciation for Pakistan's efforts and the courage of President Musharraf and consider what further assistance it can offer to assist these efforts. (Paragraph 243)**

We warmly welcome Pakistan's impressive efforts to combat international terrorism. Pakistan is a key ally in the international counter-terrorism campaign and we have developed a close and effective working relationship with Pakistan. We welcome the significant number of arrests of key international terrorist/al Qaeda figures as well as local operatives, including most recently Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, the suspect in the bombing of the US Embassy in Tanzania and Muhammad Naim Noor Khan, al Qaeda's computer engineer. We appreciate the courageous actions taken by President Musharraf and his government and fully recognise the increased risk, which President Musharraf in particular now faces. To help mitigate this risk, the UK has provided advice and assistance to the Pakistani security forces in improving VVIP protection skills. The UK is also currently providing advice and assistance to the Pakistani law enforcement agencies on combating terrorist financing, counter terrorism policing skills, regional aviation security and crisis management.

**38. We are concerned that insufficient progress has been made on reforming Pakistan's education system. The situation is urgent given the need to combat the dangerous nexus of poverty and extremism. We recommend that the Government give its full support to Pakistan's efforts to reform the education system, including providing financial and administrative assistance. (Paragraph 248)**

We believe that the best way to offer Pakistani children from poor households a good alternative to madrassah education is to help the Government of Pakistan realise its PRSP policy objectives to improve the quality of, and access to, state funded schools. In this regard, the Department for International Development is working with both federal and provincial governments to support reforms in the management and governance of education in Pakistan under the new devolved government ordinance. This involves strengthening district government management, community involvement, monitoring and reporting, and citizen accountability. In order to look more critically at the issues around madrassah education, the FCO and DFID are jointly undertaking an analysis of the supply of, and demand for, madrassah schools in two representative districts in Pakistan.

**39. We conclude that progress of development efforts in Pakistan's tribal areas has been disappointingly slow. These efforts are critical to successfully addressing the root causes of extremism as well as tackling the drug problem.**

**We recommend that the Government give serious consideration to increasing its support for development efforts in these areas, including financial and administrative assistance. (Paragraph 254)**

The Department for International Development is in the process of finalising its new Country Assistance Plan for Pakistan, which will focus on development activity in two key provinces: North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Punjab. The Government of Pakistan has increased its development effort in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). DFID is in discussion with the Government, in the context of the new Country Assistance Plan, about drawing on its development policy work in NWFP to support the Government of Pakistan's work in FATA. In addition to DFID assistance, the FCO and other government departments have significantly increased bilateral assistance and co-operation with Pakistan, including in the tribal areas on counter narcotics issues. This has been in response to the renewed cultivation of opiates in Pakistan since 2001 and continued trafficking of opiates from Afghanistan.

**40. We conclude that the conflict over Kashmir is a potential catalyst for extremism. The conflict is made more serious by the fact that both parties are nuclear powers. However, we welcome the constructive approach being taken by both governments. We recommend that the Government encourage both parties to prioritise their work towards a resolution. We further recommend that the Government ensure that the US remains fully seized of the importance of resolving the Kashmir problem. (Paragraph 256)**

The Government welcomes the continuing Composite Dialogue between New Delhi and Islamabad and, as a close friend of both countries, we continue to encourage them to continue their discussions and engage substantively on all of their unresolved issues, including on Kashmir. We agree that the conflict over Kashmir continues to motivate some individuals towards extremism. We condemn all terrorist attacks, including those carried out in Kashmir. Moreover, we do not believe terrorism does anything to advance the cause in whose name it is perpetrated. We continue to work closely with our US allies, who remain fully focused on the importance of the Kashmir issue.

**41. We welcome the Pakistani government's co-operation on proliferation following the alarming revelations about the al Qaeda Khan network. We recommend that the United Kingdom Government continue to work closely with Pakistan to pursue the trail of Dr Khan's proliferation activities and to prevent further proliferation. (Paragraph 269)**

The Government intends to continue its active efforts to ensure that the al Qaeda Khan network is fully wound up, including through ongoing cooperation with the Government of Pakistan and other states.

**42. We recognise the progress that Pakistan has made towards restoring democracy and welcome Pakistan's readmission to the Commonwealth. However, we are concerned about the slow progress of democratisation and in**

**particular the dominant role of the army in the country, which we believe is detrimental to the democratic process. We recommend that the Government work with Pakistan to encourage democratic reform, and also provide assistance in institution-building. (Paragraph 276)**

The UK welcomed Pakistan's readmission to the councils of the Commonwealth as an important sign of international recognition of the progress made by the Pakistani government in the transition to democracy. We are glad to see parliament beginning to play a more substantive role and we look forward to working with the new Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz and his team.

The UK is working closely with Pakistan to promote institution-building in various fields. The Prime Minister launched the Joint Judicial Cooperation Working Group in 2002 to act as a discussion forum for mutual legal assistance and technical and training requests. We funded a project to develop textbooks for the Bar Council exam and are providing police training to various forces in Pakistan. The Department for International Development is working to support improvements to the democratic process in Pakistan including through initiatives to improve grassroots democracy, the embedding of the recently introduced devolution reforms and extensive capacity-building support for the strengthening of key representative bodies. Efforts are being made to secure greater accountability of the state to its citizens by enhanced awareness of their entitlements and the participation, particularly of women, in decision-making at all levels of devolved government. This is complemented by a FCO programme to train new women councillors who now have seats reserved for them under President Musharraf's local government reforms. This work will be expanded under the Accountability and Empowerment outcome of the new DFID Country Assistance Plan for Pakistan. We welcome the opportunities offered by the devolution reform process to encourage greater citizen participation and local accountability and will continue to support Pakistan in implementing this challenging reform with its implications for greater democratisation.

**43. We conclude that the human rights situation in Pakistan remains unacceptable. We commend the work of the Foreign Office to tackle the problem of forced marriage in Pakistan involving United Kingdom citizens. However, we recommend that the Government encourage Pakistan to adhere to international human rights standards and guarantee the rights of all Pakistani citizens. We further recommend that the Government offer Pakistan assistance in capacity-building and training with regard to law enforcement, the criminal justice system and human rights. (Paragraph 279)**

The Government continues to have grave concern about human rights in Pakistan. We regularly make known our concerns to the Government of Pakistan, including through collective action through the European Union. EU representations were made to the Government of Pakistan in April and May of this year and in February and June 2003. These raised our concerns about the situation in general as well as highlighting specific cases of abuse.

Through the Department for International Development, the UK has made substantial investments in governance and social development in Pakistan and supported the devolution process, increased political participation and representation of women. The Government supports substantial programmes to promote human rights, including key initiatives on violence against women, particularly honour killing, increasing religious tolerance, lobbying against the death penalty, strengthening civil society and increasing access to justice. The FCO is actively working with parliamentarians to improve their lobbying techniques through the Parliamentarians Commission for Human Rights and is promoting links between advocacy groups, including the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, and the National Assembly, in order to develop the scope for improved legislative protection and parliamentary scrutiny. We also have programmes that aim to strengthen laws on honour killing, against domestic violence and to increase and improve Pakistan's law-enforcement capacity.

### **The Russian Federation**

**44. We conclude that the latest diplomatic efforts have re-engaged Russia on Iraq and are contributing to a less divisive climate. We commend the Government for its work on the latest United Nations Security Council Resolution on Iraq, but we also recommend that the Government continue to consult the Russians closely so that it is in a position to take account of their concerns in Iraq and the broader Middle East. (Paragraph 289)**

We agree. Engagement with Russia is essential if we are to ensure a stable and peaceful future for Iraq and the broader Middle East.

**45. We conclude that the Russian Federation's support for efforts to bring peace and democracy to Afghanistan is valuable, but that support for the reconstruction process is being damaged by the slow progress on the counter-narcotics strategy. (Paragraph 293)**

We value and are keen to improve co-operation with Russia on counter-narcotics issues in Afghanistan, on which we comment on our wider strategy to reduce opium production in that country in our response to Conclusion 32. We are presently working on plans for joint UK/Russia capacity building projects in Afghanistan. We are also working closely with Russia on the Tajikistan/Afghanistan border, where Russia controls large sections of the Tajik-side of the border.

**46. We conclude that the reform of the military and security services in Russia would contribute to the international struggle against terrorism. We therefore recommend that the Government continue its support for Russian efforts to reform its military and its contribution to mutual understanding by increasing exchanges of military personnel between the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out how it intends to strengthen military ties with the Russian Federation. (Paragraph 298)**

We agree. We fully support the recommendation to strengthen bilateral links with the Russian military. This reflects the Government's commitment, set out in the Defence Relations Strategy 2003, "...to engage with [Russia] more closely, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in order to build regional confidence and security for her and around her."

However, there are factors impeding this aspiration. The UK is one of many countries offering a bilateral programme and, although a close relationship has been developed under the Naval Co-operation Programme and they respect our expertise in counter-terrorism, peace keeping operations and financial management, co-operation will inevitably be limited by size of the Russian defence ministry's international co-operation budget. Moreover, the expanding the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) co-operation programme is absorbing funding increases and, as a matter of status, the Russian defence ministry prefers, at times, to co-operate either with NATO or the USA as the remaining superpower. The extradition and asylum decisions in the case of Akhmed Zakayev (and, to a lesser extent, the asylum grant to Boris Berezovsky) have also led to a period of cooler relationship in defence co-operation.

That said, these obstacles could be tackled by continuing to offer a significant Defence Relations Activity Programme (DRAP), and assistance via the NATO-Russia Council. These provide practical military co-operation initiatives to help build confidence and mutual understanding. The aim of the DRAP is to develop new links with the military, at all levels, and strengthen existing links. Existing links are particularly strong in relation to naval co-operation, disposal and storage of WMD via the Arctic Military Environmental Co-operation (AMEC) Agreement and our continued support to the Russian Resettlement Programme.

These activities help to improve our influence with the Russian Armed Forces to assist in creating a philosophy and framework more likely to promote peace and stability, and in addition, develop interoperability to improve the feasibility of future joint deployments on Peace Support Operations. The bilateral programme will also improve our strategic insight and political-military influence, both of which are vital to ensure that we can co-operate effectively to counter threats to our mutual security.

**47. We conclude that the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) is an essential tool to improve the political and military engagement between Russia and the alliance members. We recommend that the Government encourage its fellow members of NATO to expand co-operation through the NRC in order to alleviate concerns in Moscow about NATO's expansion into eastern Europe and to prevent a 'Great Game' between Russia and NATO in Central Asia. We also recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out its plans to develop the NRC as a tool in the war against terrorism. (Paragraph 305)**

The Government firmly believes in the NRC's value as a forum for political consultation between the countries of NATO and Russia. Close contact helps build

trust, and in recent months this has helped NATO reassure Russia that the accession of the seven new Allies in March was not a threat to Russian security.

Whilst both NATO and Russia are keen to improve their existing ties with the countries of Central Asia, they share an overarching interest in the stability and security of the region. The Government strongly supports the right of Central Asian countries to choose to participate in the Partnership for Peace initiative. We are aware of Russian sensitivities about NATO activity in this area, and we try to ensure that the Alliance as a whole is as well. We are confident that Russia and NATO can both assist these countries without harmful competition or confrontation developing.

The UK has played a leading role in the NRC's broad-based programme of military co-operation in response to the threat of terrorism. The NRC's active co-operation in countering terrorism extends from threat assessments to practical exercises in civil emergency planning and nuclear accident response. In April, the third NATO-Russia high-level conference on terrorism discussed ways of enhancing military co-operation in the fight against terrorism. The closer relationship between NATO and Russia has led to the recent Russia offer to support Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's counter-terrorism naval mission in the Mediterranean. The UK remains active in focusing the NRC's activities against terrorism.

**48. We conclude that links exist between the Chechen rebels and the international network of terrorists affiliated to al Qaeda, but that the conflict is not purely a terrorist insurgency. We further conclude that Chechnya has great importance as a rallying cry for Islamist insurgency throughout the Muslim world, and that the heavy handed approach of the Russian authorities, including repeated human rights abuses, risks further radicalising the Chechen population and spreading the conflict in the North Caucasus. We recommend that the Government engage the Russian Federation on Chechnya, and comment on Russian policy in the region – in private if necessary. We also recommend that the United Kingdom encourage the Russian authorities to increase the role of the international community in the secessionist region, and that in its response to this Report the Government set out how it will seek to encourage the Russians both to expand the OSCE and Council of Europe mandates in Chechnya and to consult with the ordinary people of Chechnya. (Paragraph 319)**

We note the FAC's assessment. However, while we recognise that the conflict in Chechnya is indeed not purely a terrorist insurgency, it is important to acknowledge that Russia faces genuine and serious security problems in the North Caucasus. The recent tragedy at Beslan was one harrowing example, but there have been many other instances of innocent Russian civilians being killed as a result of terrorism. We must continue to be unequivocal in our condemnation of such attacks. And we must work as closely as possible with the Russians to combat terrorism.

Meanwhile, we will continue, as the FAC recommends, to engage the Russian government regularly on Chechnya at all levels, emphasising the need for a long-term political solution to the region's problems, and stressing the important part that respect for human rights has to play in making such a solution viable. The Foreign Secretary has repeatedly raised Chechnya in these terms.

We would fully support an increased role for the OSCE and Council of Europe in Chechnya but this can obviously only happen with the consent of the Russian authorities. We understand that Russia is currently discussing work with the Council of Europe. We hope this will result in a substantive programme of activities to improve the situation in Chechnya.

**49. We conclude that Russian support for Iran's nuclear activities could risk contributing to the spread of WMD capabilities in the Middle East by advancing the Iranian nuclear programme. We recommend that the Government, together with its EU and US partners, seek to persuade the Russians to ensure that their support for the Bushehr nuclear plant does not extend to assistance with activity consistent with a nuclear weapons development programme. (Paragraph 326)**

We hold regular discussions with the Russian Federation on a range of nuclear non-proliferation issues. We recognise the particular importance of the Russian Federation through its involvement with the construction of the Bushehr plant. We will continue to work with the Russian Federation and other members of the IAEA Board of Governors to ensure that Iran meets in full its international obligations and undertakings.

**50. We conclude that international efforts, such as the CTR programme, to counter the proliferation of the Soviet Union's WMD legacy are essential work. However, we also conclude that while the efforts of the EU are welcome, its contribution to non-proliferation efforts neither takes account of the scale and threat of the task, nor of the EU's economic importance. We recommend that the Government encourage its partners in Europe to increase the EU's contribution to non-proliferation efforts in the Russian Federation. (Paragraph 330)**

We will continue to co-operate closely with our European partners and the European Commission in order to maximise the effectiveness of the EU's contribution, including through the Global Partnership.

**51. We conclude that the G8 Global Partnership makes an essential contribution to the reduction of the threat of proliferation of WMD, although certain difficulties remain between Russia and the other members. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out how it has resolved the differences over liability for future damages, the tax status of donor funds, and issues over access to the sites, as well as how it is working with the USA to help overcome American differences with the Russian authorities. (Paragraph 334)**

Provisions covering exemption from liability for future damages, tax exemption, and access to sites for UK projects under the G8 Global Partnership are included in the agreements with the Russian Federation on Chemical Weapons Destruction, signed in December 2001, and on Nuclear Decommissioning in North West Russia, signed in June 2003. We are seeking to widen the scope of the nuclear agreement to cover nuclear safety and security projects across the whole of the Russian Federation and hope to have this framework in place this autumn. To date, the UK has not experienced significant problems in relation to liability or tax exemptions.

Access to sensitive/military sites is governed by Russian legislation, and is usually subject to a period of 45 days advance notice. For Nuclear programmes the process seems to work broadly satisfactorily. On Chemical Weapons destruction we have recently experienced some difficulties in accessing certain sites, where we have been unreasonably refused access. We have strongly expressed our concerns to the Russian authorities since predictable and reliable access is an essential requirement to manage projects effectively. We judge that access will continue to be a key issue and we remain vigilant to any changes in regulations or attitude of the Russian Government.

If the US had any differences with the Russian Federation, it would expect to resolve any differences bilaterally in the first instance. We remain in very close touch with the US on all aspects of the G8 Global Partnership, and issues of general concern to members of the G8 Global Partnership are discussed in G8 working groups. On the CW destruction programme at Shchuch'ye we have established close co-ordination with the US, both at senior official and working levels. At UK initiative, an informal Shchuch'ye Co-ordination Group has been established, with representatives from the UK, US, Russia and Canada: this also provides an opportunity for discussing concerns which affect these participants at Shchuch'ye, and identifying possible solutions.

**52. We conclude that progress on the destruction of the Russian Federation's chemical weapons stock is most welcome but unfortunately is well behind the planned timetable. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out how it will encourage the Russian authorities to speed the destruction process and outline its plans for work at the destruction facility at Shchuch'ye. (Paragraph 338)**

The Russian Government is responsible for destroying its chemical weapon stocks in accordance with the deadlines set out in the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The primary reasons for delays to the Russian CW destruction programme are lack of adequate priority in the years following entry into force of the CWC, and lack of adequate funding. In these respects, the situation has improved substantially in recent years, and the Russian Federation has reported that its funding has been some \$170m annually. However, we judge that this is still insufficient, and in G8 meetings and other fora we encourage the Russian Government to increase funding levels further, and to provide greater transparency of their funding and expenditure, and greater clarity of their plans. We therefore welcome the recent announcements of the Russian Government's intention to



increase substantially the budget for its destruction programme, which should help to shorten its overall duration. The substantial new funding commitments made under the G8 Global Partnership by the UK and other G8 and non-G8 members should also help, given effective co-operation, planning and transparency from the Russian side.

We also maintain regular liaison with the Russian Federal Industry Agency on their plans for Russian CW destruction and the progress in implementing them.

The UK's current priority at Shchuch'ye is to complete the electricity supply project by early 2005, with funding from the UK, Norway, the EU and the Czech Republic. We plan to provide further funding for infrastructure projects at Shchuch'ye and for the procurement of equipment for the second munitions destruction building, working in close co-operation with Russia, Canada and the US. We will also continue to facilitate the provision of assistance by other donors (including Canada, the Czech Republic and New Zealand) at Shchuch'ye, through the UK programme.

**53. We conclude that the destruction of biological weapons material in the Russian Federation should be a priority, and recommend that the Government set out how it will engage its Russian counterparts more directly on its biological weapons stocks and the employment of Russian scientists. We further conclude that the security of stocks of pathogens and the proliferation of expertise of Russian scientists present serious challenges for the international community. (Paragraph 339)**

The Government recognises the importance of addressing risks of proliferation in the biological arena. We have given priority to the risks of proliferation of expertise rather than materials. The UK already contributes to such international non-proliferation efforts in Russia and the FSU through the EU's funding for the ISTC and STCU. The UK's first biological non-proliferation project, at a plant health institute in Georgia, began on 1 May 2004. We are working closely with the US and other donors to identify priorities for the redirection of scientists in the biological field, and opportunities for the UK to contribute both funding and expertise. We intend to increase the level of UK engagement in this area. The Russian Government does not attach a high priority to this element of the Global Partnership, and we therefore normally expect to work through the ISTC.

**54. We conclude that the work carried out by the G8 Global Partnership on the Soviet Union's nuclear legacy is a most valuable contribution to non-proliferation efforts and the war against terrorism. However, we are concerned that some projects, such as the plutonium disposition programme, are proceeding less effectively than others, like the submarine decommissioning programme in North West Russia. We recommend that the Government maintain the momentum of its efforts, and set out in its response to this Report how it will resolve the current difficulties with the Russian authorities, so as to accelerate the programmes. (Paragraph 343)**

We fully recognise the need make progress on other priority areas under the G8 Global Partnership such as nuclear security and disposition of fissile material, and will continue to build on progress already achieved in other areas. We intend to lobby hard to ensure legal frameworks for new project areas are established as soon as possible, and we have had indications that the Russian authorities are supportive of our approach.

**55. We conclude that the Russian Federation is a valuable ally in the war against terrorism, although different perceptions of the conflict have an impact on relations between the United Kingdom and Russia. We recommend that the Government maintain its engagement with Russia in order to ensure its commitment to the war against terrorism, by allaying Russian concerns about Afghanistan, Iraq and NATO, by maintaining a critical dialogue on Russian policy in Chechnya, and by engaging the Russian Federation on the threat of WMD proliferation. We conclude that continued engagement with the Russian Federations on matters of mutual concern offers opportunities to make an important contribution to success in the war against terrorism. (Paragraph 344)**

We fully support this conclusion. What happens in Russia, and our engagement with her, has significant bearing on all of the United Kingdom's strategic international policy priorities for the next decade. Continued engagement and co-operation with the Russian Federation remain essential.

### **Israel-Palestine Conflict**

**56. We conclude that resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict must remain a United Kingdom foreign policy priority. We reiterate our previous conclusion that resolution of this conflict is an essential component in the wider US-led campaign to defeat Islamist terrorism and to promote reform in the Middle East region. (Paragraph 393)**

We agree with this conclusion. MEPP will remain a UK foreign policy priority. We also agree that a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict is crucial both for Israelis and Palestinians, and as an important precondition for long-term peace in the region.

**57. We support the position taken by the Government in welcoming Israel's planned withdrawal from Gaza while insisting that all aspects of the final settlement remain open for negotiation. However, we conclude that it is important that the withdrawal from Gaza should be followed by withdrawals from the West Bank. (Paragraph 394)**

Our long-term objective remains an end to the conflict through negotiations in which all final status issues are decided between the two parties. We agree that it is important that the withdrawal from Gaza should be followed by withdrawals from the West Bank. We are working with the parties and with the international community to this end. We have urged the Israelis to ensure that withdrawal is as full as possible. We are working with the Palestinians to ensure that they can make

the best use of Israeli withdrawal to improve the daily lives of the Palestinian people.

**58. We recommend that the Government work with Israel, the Palestinian Authority and the Quartet to facilitate Israel's 'disengagement' from Gaza, to encourage Israel to make further withdrawals, to bring an end to Palestinian suicide attacks, and to aid reconstruction and security efforts in the Palestinian territories. We further recommend that the Government, in its response to this Report, set out in detail what steps it is taking to ensure that Israel's plan for 'disengagement' from Gaza is fully consistent with a durable solution to the wider Israel-Palestine problem, including details of any steps being taken with regard to post-withdrawal peace keeping. (Paragraph 395)**

We agree with the approach suggested by the Committee. We continue to work with the parties and with the Quartet on all these issues, including bilateral work with the Palestinian Authority on security.

The UK, bilaterally and in co-operation with international partners, continues to engage with Israel to ensure withdrawals from Gaza and the West Bank take place as soon as possible and are as complete as possible. We have also made clear that it is essential that these withdrawals should be a first step, rather than an end in themselves. The UK believes the Roadmap remains the best means to achieve a comprehensive and lasting settlement to the conflict.

The UK is also continuing work with the PA in areas where they need to deliver a visible improvement in the security situation. Such improvements are important in themselves, can play a role in breaking the spiralling cycle of violence, and should help build a strong foundation for an effective PA to reassert its authority over Gaza. We have seen some positive results, but more work is needed.

We are also encouraging the parties to work together and with the World Bank to ensure the economic viability of Gaza post-withdrawal. This should include access for products from Gaza to international export markets. If Gaza withdrawal is to have the chance of success the PA must also have the resources to undertake the reforms required of them under the Roadmap. The UK has contributed £7m to the World Bank Trust Fund. We have urged international partners to contribute to the fund.

The UK has long supported the development of more effective and accountable Palestinian institutions in preparation for Palestinian statehood. Encouraging free and fair elections, at all levels, is one part of this. National and municipal elections in the Palestinian Authority (PA) are due in early 2005 - the first since the PA came into being in 1994. Preparations are underway, and voter registration for both elections began on 4 September 2004 and is due to be concluded in November. The European Commission has contributed substantial funding to the Central Elections Commission (CEC), which is responsible for voter registration and preparations for national and presidential elections. The UK also intends to provide a consultant to

assist the PA in its preparations for the municipal elections, there are already UN, US and EU consultants working with the CEC.

Through the EU and our direct contacts with other Quartet members, the UK also seeks to ensure that the Quartet continues to provide leadership in the effort to stimulate positive steps from both sides. We have also maintained close contact with the government of Egypt, which has offered to play a role in training and support of the PA to deliver effective security in Gaza post-withdrawal. The UK stands ready to support these efforts.

**59. We reiterate our previous conclusion that the case for building a barrier along the Green Line would be strong and understandable, but to build it within the West Bank is neither justifiable nor acceptable and gives rise to fears that Israel intends to annex this land. We recommend that the Government make it clear to Israel that efforts unilaterally to change facts on the ground in occupied territory are illegal under international law. We are encouraged by the recent decisions by the Israeli high court halting construction of the barrier, but reiterate our previous conclusion that Israeli maintenance and expansion of illegal settlements combined with the construction of the barrier on Palestinian land constitute a severe impediment to efforts to secure a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinian Authority and to the creation of a viable Palestinian state. We recommend that the Government make this position absolutely and unequivocally clear in its public pronouncements, as well as in its diplomatic exchanges with the United States and Israel. We conclude that actions taken so far have failed to stop Israel's construction of the barrier in occupied territory. We further conclude that the United Nations General Assembly Resolution ES-10/15 of 20 July 2004, passed overwhelmingly and with the support of the British Government and all EU Member states, regarding the barrier, is to be welcomed. We recommend that the Government set out in its response to this Report what it is doing bilaterally and with the EU, the US and the Quartet to stop construction of the barrier in occupied territory. (Paragraph 396)**

We agree that building the barrier on occupied territory and the associated confiscation of land is contrary to international law. We made our position clear in a Ministerial statement, even before the International Court of Justice gave its Advisory Opinion on the issue, and have reiterated this position since.

We are in regular contact with the Israeli Government on the issue of the barrier. We have made our views on the illegality of the route of the barrier known and have made clear to the Israeli Government that they must re-route the barrier away from occupied land.

The Quartet has expressed its concern about the actual and proposed route of the barrier. The EU has an important role to play. We have worked with EU partners to ensure a consistent common position on the barrier. This is best illustrated by the recent common vote in favour of UN General Assembly resolution ES-10/15, which called on the Israeli Government to comply with its legal obligations relating

to the route of the barrier and on the Palestinian Authority and Israeli Government to immediately implement their commitments under the Quartet's Roadmap. We continue to press the importance of this issue with the Israeli Government.

The UK has also expressed concern about the announcement by the Israeli Government of plans to build further housing units in a number of settlements in the West Bank. We have made clear to the Israeli Government that settlement expansion is contrary to Israel's commitments in the Roadmap and will make it ever harder to reach a peaceful negotiated two-state solution to the conflict.

**60. The high level of violence suffered by both peoples makes a resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict urgent. This urgency is increased by the serious deterioration in living conditions in the Palestinian territories. It is critical that, as well as putting pressure on the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority to do more to stop the violence, efforts are made to 'de-radicalise' the Palestinian population, by addressing the conditions of extreme poverty in which many of them live. (Paragraph 397)**

We agree on the urgency of finding a resolution to the conflict. We also agree on the need to provide support to the Palestinian population, both in light of the humanitarian need and to create a climate in which a political process is viable.

The UK contributes aid to the Palestinian population through DFID. This financial year DFID funding for Palestinians is expected to be £28.5m. Nearly half will be provided for UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees). We are the fourth largest bilateral donor, after the USA, Saudi Arabia and Norway.

The UK has also responded to urgent requirements as they have arisen. To help those affected by Israeli house demolitions in Rafah, on 28 May 2004 DFID announced a UK contribution of £2m to the UNRWA emergency programmes in Gaza. These funds will contribute to temporary housing, emergency food, medical care, house repairs and new houses in Rafah.

We have also worked with the World Bank to create a Trust Fund for Palestine to provide the financial support the Palestinian Authority requires to carry out essential reforms. The UK has provided £7m to this fund. Reforms will have a significant positive impact on the Palestinian Authority's ability to provide essential services to the Palestinian people.

**61. We conclude with regret that the Road Map is stalled, possibly fatally. We further conclude that there is little likelihood of the two parties reaching a negotiated settlement of their own accord in the short term, and that time is fast running out for a viable two-state solution to be achieved. Nevertheless, we believe that a resolution of the conflict along the lines discussed at Taba in January 2001 is not unattainable. (Paragraph 398)**

After Taba, the parties themselves declared that they had never been closer to reaching a permanent status deal. The issues of permanent status remain for negotiation between the parties. The priority now is to end the violence and return to a meaningful political dialogue. Lasting peace will only come through dialogue and negotiation.

We welcome Prime Minister Sharon's plan to withdrawal from all settlements in Gaza and some in the West Bank. As the Quartet indicated in their statement of 4 May 2004, such a withdrawal would be in line with Phase One of the Roadmap and would be a real opportunity for progress after little has been seen for many months. We, and the rest of the international community, must work to make it so.

We recognise that a great deal more progress needs to be made to get back to the Roadmap. The Government continues its close engagement on MEPP through extensive contacts with the parties, the Quartet and other international players, working to push forward the Roadmap process.

**62. We once again recommend that the Government work to encourage the US to send a high-level emissary to the Middle East with the dedicated aim of resolving this long-standing conflict. While recognising Israel's mistrust of European policy in the region, we also conclude that Europe, including the United Kingdom, could be playing a more influential role. In order to overcome this mistrust, we recommend that the Government consider how to engage Israel more positively, both bilaterally and through the EU. (Paragraph 399)**

As we have stated in our previous response, the UK government believes that the international community role should be led by the Quartet. The Quartet statement of 4 May 2004 set out a balanced and constructive role for the international community in moving the peace process forward, and making a success of withdrawal from settlements in Gaza Strip. We continue to work with all parties including the US and EU to encourage both Israel and the Palestinian Authority to fulfil their Roadmap objectives.

High level official delegations from Washington have visited the region repeatedly in recent months for detailed discussions on the way forward. We judge that the fact of US engagement is more important than how it is delivered, and we do not intend to make representations about a high-level US emissary to the Middle East.

We meet EU Partners regularly at all levels in order to co-ordinate on how best to engage Israel. Most recently the Foreign Secretary addressed this issue at the EU Foreign Ministers informal meeting in Maastricht on 3-4 September 2004. The EU remains committed to meaningful contact with both parties. There have also been recent positive signals from Israel on the need for involvement by both the EU and Arab countries in security, politics and the economy of the PA.

The EU-Israel Association Agreement, which entered into force on 1 June 2000, provides for preferential trading arrangements, including reduced tariffs in a

number of areas. But it also emphasises that respect for human rights and democratic principles guides the internal and international policy of both Israel and the Community and constitutes an essential and positive element of the Agreement.

**63. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out its response to the question the Prime Minister asked in his Sedgefield constituency speech on 5 March 2004, when he said: “It may well be that under international law as presently constituted, a regime can systematically brutalise and oppress its people and there is nothing anyone can do, when dialogue, diplomacy and even sanctions fail, unless it comes within the definition of a humanitarian catastrophe... This may be the law, but should it be?” (Paragraph 406)**

The Government believes that it is vital for the international community to act effectively to deal with human rights abuses and repression conducted by a government against its own people. The protection and promotion of human rights is one of the key principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

As the Prime Minister's speech quoted by the Committee makes clear, there are many tools at our disposal in countering human rights abuses. These include political pressure, diplomacy and sanctions. The human rights bodies and mechanisms of the United Nations have an important role to play in this area. We employ many of these tools successfully to raise the level of respect for human rights around the world.

However, as the Prime Minister indicated, there are occasions when none of these tools is enough to prevent repression and in exceptional circumstances, military action may be the only option. The Security Council has on a number of occasions cited severe cases of internal repression or humanitarian disasters in determining that a situation constitutes a threat to international peace and security, and has acted to address the situation, for example in Somalia, Eastern Zaire, East Timor, Sierra Leone and Haiti.

The Government believes that these examples should point the way to a more consistent readiness on the part of the international community to tackle humanitarian disasters and large-scale human rights abuses, even where these could be argued to be internal to a single country.

The Government has played a major part in the international debate on the circumstances in which authorisation of military force by the Security Council may be justified, including through the speech by the Prime Minister highlighted by the Committee. In particular, the Government has worked to promote a common understanding of the circumstances in which military action for humanitarian purposes may be justified, as described in more detail in response to question 66 below.

The Government has also made its view clear that international law recognises that, in exceptional circumstances, military action may be justified when it is the only

way to avert an overwhelming humanitarian catastrophe, and that this is the case even in the absence of explicit authorisation from the Security Council.

**64. We conclude that the debate about the role of the United Nations Security Council in collective use of force is part of the case for reform of the Security Council, and we await with interest the conclusions of the Panel of Eminent Persons examining the case for reform in the United Nations. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government outline and explain its proposals for reform of the United Nations. We also conclude that any reforms must not undermine the system of collective security or threaten the paramountcy of the United Nations in the international legal system. (Paragraph 414)**

The Government is a long-standing supporter of enlargement of the Security Council's membership to ensure that it better represents the modern world. The Government believes the case for Council reform stands apart from any debate about the Council's role in authorising the use of force.

The Government supports the work of the Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change. We hope that it will provide concrete recommendations for improving the UN's response to the full range of threats to international peace and security. The Foreign Secretary set out some thoughts on the areas under discussion by the High Level Panel in a speech to the Royal Institute of International Affairs on 2 September 2004. A copy of the speech is annexed to this response. The Government also intends to set out its thoughts on UN reform more fully in a Command Paper to be published in mid-October.

The Government fully agrees with the Committee that any proposed reforms should strengthen the system of collective security, and the role of the United Nations within it.

**65. We conclude that the concept of 'imminence' in anticipatory self-defence may require reassessment in the light of the WMD threat but that the Government should be very cautious to limit the application of the doctrine of anticipatory self-defence so as to prevent its abuse by states pursuing their national interest. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government set out how, in the event of the legitimisation of the doctrine of anticipatory self-defence, it will persuade its allies to limit the use of the doctrine to a "threat of catastrophic attack". We also recommend that the Government explain its position on the 'proportionality' of a response to a catastrophic attack, and how to curtail the abuse of that principle in the event of the acceptance of the doctrine of anticipatory self-defence by the international community. (Paragraph 429)**

It is the Government's view that international law permits the use of force in self-defence against an imminent attack, but does not authorise the use of force to mount a pre-emptive strike against a threat that is more remote. The Government believes that these rules must be applied in the context of the particular facts of



each case and that the concept of what constitutes an “imminent” attack will develop to meet new circumstances and new threats.

As set out above, the Government takes the view that a right of anticipatory self-defence is already part of the right of self-defence under international law. It does not therefore require "legitimation". Nor is it limited only to the threat of a "catastrophic attack", although the likely scale of the attack will clearly be a relevant factor in judging whether an armed response is necessary and proportionate.

The Committee expresses a concern that a proportionate response to a threat of catastrophic attack would itself be catastrophic. In fact, the principle of proportionality in the law of self-defence does not relate to the relative scale of the action on each side. Rather it requires that the action taken in self-defence should be proportionate to the aim of removing the threat. It might be the case, for example, that a proportionate response in self-defence to an imminent attack with WMD by a terrorist group could be a small-scale conventional attack, if this were sufficient to remove the threat.

It is an important condition of military action in self-defence that it should only be used as a last resort. It must be necessary to use force to deal with the particular threat that is faced. Application of this principle and the other principles set out above should prevent abuse of the right of anticipatory self-defence.

**66. We conclude that a doctrine of humanitarian intervention appears to be emerging, but that its application in the context of the war against terrorism raises difficult questions of interpretation and embodies significant risk. We recommend that the Government work to establish a consensus on when intervention on humanitarian grounds is permissible, in order to prevent its abuse by states pursuing their national interest. (Paragraph 433)**

As noted above in the response to question 63, the Government believes that there are occasions when it is right to intervene militarily in response to large-scale humanitarian crises. The Security Council has been increasingly willing to take this view in particular situations.

There have been a number of attempts to establish international consensus on guidelines or criteria to be used in deciding when military action is justified. The Prime Minister set out some broad principles in his Chicago speech in 1999, and the Government subsequently put forward a set of policy guidelines to the Security Council. Although these guidelines were not accepted by the Council at the time, the international debate has continued, including through the work of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. The Government hopes that the High Level Panel established by the Secretary-General will make recommendations in this area.

The right to use force to avert an overwhelming humanitarian catastrophe is quite separate from action against terrorism. Military action to deal with terrorism may

be justified in exercise of the right of self-defence, as recognised in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. And acts of terrorism may constitute a threat to international peace and security, leading to the authorisation of the use of force by the Security Council.

### **International Co-operation to Tackle Terrorism**

**67. We conclude that al Qaeda continues to pose a very serious threat to the United Kingdom and its interests. As a result, fighting the threat of international terrorism must remain a top foreign policy priority. (Paragraph 444)**

The Government agrees that addressing the threat from international terrorism must remain a top foreign policy priority.

**68. We welcome the efforts to reform the UN's Counter-Terrorism Committee in order to make it more effective. We commend the Government's role in the reform process and its continued commitment to the Counter-Terrorism Committee. We further commend the work of the FCO to assist countries to build their counter-terrorism capacity through the Global Opportunity Fund. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government provide a further update on the FCO's work in this area, the progress achieved to date and any area of concern. We further recommend that the Government seek to ensure that human rights concerns are incorporated in the work of the CTC and inform us of what progress has been made in this regard. (Paragraph 453)**

The Government appreciates the Committee's endorsement of its efforts so far. We will work hard to ensure that the new structure of the Counter-Terrorism Committee's Executive Directorate is operational as quickly as possible. We welcome the appointment of Javier Ruperez as Executive Director, which should ensure strong leadership. The exact structure of the Executive Directorate has yet to be finalised, but it should provide for more thorough examination of States' performance and much stronger links with key international and regional organisations and other parts of the UN system, notably the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. This should allow the CTC to draw them more closely into its work, and draw on their expertise, authority and contacts. The CTC itself is not well-placed to judge human rights compliance, but a close working relationship with UNHCHR should ensure that all the CTC's staff are alive to the requirements of human rights law, as well as keeping UNHCHR well informed of global counter-terrorism activities.

The Committee requested an update on the Government's work through the Global Opportunities Fund. The Counter-Terrorism Programme of this Fund continues to provide valuable assistance in building effective counter-terrorism and security capacity in key countries around the world. Programme activity has focused on a broad range of interventions; providing training to the police, prosecutors and judges, the development of counter-terrorism legislation, developing crisis management systems and assistance with combating the financing of terrorism by

dealing with issues relating to legislation, financial services industry regulation, law enforcement and charity regulation. Assistance continues to be directed at those countries where the terrorist threat is greatest to UK interests.

Furthermore, the Counter-Terrorism strategy continues to seek to prevent terrorism by tackling its underlying causes. We recognise the need to address the political, social and economic factors that can create the conditions in which terrorism flourishes. Therefore the Global Opportunities Fund Counter-Terrorism Programme works closely with other programmes, particularly the Engaging with the Islamic World and the Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance Programme to deliver programmes which support good governance, rule of law and democracy, and the implementation of human rights commitments.

**69. We conclude that there remains considerable cause for concern that terrorist groups retain access to significant sources of funding. We recommend that the Government redouble its efforts in this field, and that in its response to this Report it set out what progress has been achieved to date in this field, what are the main areas of difficulty, and what proposals it has to achieve further progress. (Paragraph 459)**

Combating terrorist financing requires the involvement of a wide range of government departments, and law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Considerable effort has gone into integrating all these efforts, which aim at impeding terrorist access to funds, deterring terrorists from considering the UK for financing activity, and using financial transactions as a source of intelligence on terrorist networks. In foreign policy terms, we are pursuing a number of strands:

In the wake of the 11 September attacks, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) agreed 8 Special Recommendations setting basic standards for combating terrorist financing, such as regulation of charities and informal banking. We continue to work within FATF and the G7 to flesh out these standards into detailed guidance for States.

A wide range of international organisations is working to assist countries meet the demands of the 1999 UN Terrorist Financing Convention and the 8 FATF Recommendations. We support these efforts and continue with our programme of assistance to other countries. The assistance provided by the UK includes support for the development of effective legislation and financial services regulation, law enforcement, and charity regulation, depending on the relative need in different countries. Assistance is directed to those countries where the threat to UK interests from potential terrorist financing is the greatest.

The UN, EU and UK nationally have all established mechanisms to freeze the assets of suspected terrorists. The UK continues to take action against new groups and individuals and to work to improve these systems. This is a strong deterrent and a key part of denying terrorists the use of the financial system.

The UK is also developing its operational co-operation with other countries to allow investigators and intelligence agencies to track financial transactions more effectively through the international financial system.

Much progress has been made in making financial systems more difficult and dangerous for terrorists to use. But significant challenges remain. Terrorists will seek out the weak link, be that countries where financial regulation is rudimentary, or alternative ways of moving money including through cash couriers, or raising money locally through crime. The UK is increasing further its assistance to raise standards of financial regulation and extend standards into new areas. (Both the EU and FATF are looking at addressing the movement of cash.) We will continue these efforts and will use our Presidencies of the G7/8 and the EU in 2005 in this regard.

**70. We conclude that it remains of the utmost importance that the United Kingdom work with its partners in the EU as well as the United States to combat the international threat posed by terrorism. We commend the Government for supporting the developments within the EU to facilitate more effective co-operation. However, we conclude that significant further steps are required for EU anti-terrorism action to be effective. We recommend that the Government in its response to this Report explain in detail what it is doing to encourage more effective European co-operation against terrorism. (Paragraph 465)**

Even before the 11 March attacks in Madrid, the European Security Strategy had prompted re-evaluation of the EU's efforts on counter-terrorism. After the 11 March attacks in Madrid, we were pleased that the EU adopted so quickly a challenging action plan. But we agree with the Committee that this needs implementing and more effective co-operation across Europe is important to ensure an effective response to terrorism.

The UK has met the deadlines in the March Action Plan for national implementation of agreed measures, has drafted a framework decision on the retention of communications data and is to send experts to the EU CT Co-ordinator and the new CT Cell in the EU Situation Centre. We have also pushed hard to develop other areas of the Action Plan such as terrorist financing and foreign policy. And recognising that co-operation can only work if all those involved have the best possible legislation and enforcement, we are encouraging others to take a similarly hard look at their structures and legislation as we have done.

We are also working less publicly to develop the operational contacts which deliver most. These are not on the whole through EU institutions in committees of 25, but are through bilateral contacts between experts. We are devoting increasing resources to building and using such contacts.

**71. We conclude that the expansion of membership of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) to include new members such as Russia and the willingness of Panama and Liberia to allow searches of their ships is most**

**welcome, and we commend the Government's efforts to encourage other states to agree to the interdiction of their shipping. However, we recommend that the Government work for a United Nations Security Council Resolution which would resolve the legal difficulties over PSI. We also recommend that the Government set out in its response to this Report what amendments to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation 1988 are under consideration and who has proposed them, and how the Government will draw a distinction between the legitimate and illegitimate transport of WMD by sea. (Paragraph 474)**

The Government does not accept that there are legal difficulties over the Proliferation Security Initiative: the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles, agreed in Paris on 4 September 2003, makes clear that all action under PSI will be “consistent with national legal authorities and relevant international law and frameworks, including the UN Security Council”.

UN Security Council resolution 1540, adopted unanimously under Chapter VII of the UN Charter on 28 April 2004, includes an implicit endorsement of the PSI by calling on all states “in accordance with their national legal authorities and legislation and consistent with international law, to take co-operative action to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, their means of delivery, and related materials”.

As the FAC report notes, the Government is working in the International Maritime Organisation to secure amendment to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (1988), which will make it an internationally recognised offence to transport WMD, their delivery systems and related materials on commercial vessels. This was originally a US initiative, though a number of states are working together to secure these amendments. The text of the amendments is still under active discussion, though it is likely that the boarding provisions will not relate to military or fleet auxiliary vessels, and will require express flag state consent (or deemed consent if the flag state fails to respond within 4 hours to a request to board one of its vessels). The Government will keep the FAC informed as discussions develop.

**72. We give a cautious welcome to Libya's agreement to comply with international non-proliferation initiatives. We recommend that the Government continue working to integrate Libya into the international community, and that it set out in its response to this Report what it is doing to encourage a degree of economic reform or political liberalisation in Libya, particularly in association with the European Union. (Paragraph 479)**

We welcome the Committee’s support for Libya’s integration into the international community. The Government continues to work to this end. Through the Global Opportunities Fund the Government is supporting projects to promote good governance (in the area of prison reform) and economic reform in Libya. The Government is keen to see improved relations between Libya and the European Union and recognises the importance of Colonel Qadhafi’s visit to Brussels earlier this year.

**73. We conclude that Iran's nuclear programme continues to pose an intense challenge for the international community, and that the continued exertion of diplomatic pressure by the European troika, the US and the Russian Federation is essential to its resolution. We recommend that the Government persevere with its strategy towards Iran's nuclear programme and make clear to the authorities in Tehran the benefits of compliance. (Paragraph 485)**

We share the Committee's assessment. The Government believes that dialogue is the right way forward, in parallel with the IAEA inspection process.

**74. There is a clear need for reform throughout the Arab world. However, we conclude that it is important not to seek to impose reform on the region but to encourage and support domestic initiatives where appropriate. We agree with the Foreign Secretary that Arab reform must be home-grown and we commend the work of the Foreign Office in support of regional and national reform initiatives. We also welcome the work of the BBC World Service and British Council in the region. We recommend that in its response to this Report the Government provide a fully up-dated report on the work it is doing in this area. (Paragraph 497)**

The Government is continuing to expand its work to encourage and support regionally-led social, political and economic reform in the Arab world. We are continuing to pursue this both through multilateral organisations and bilaterally.

At the June 2004 G8 Sea Island Summit, the G8 adopted a Plan of Support for Reform in the Broader Middle East and North Africa. Our focus is now turning to implementation of the Plan. Discussions are underway for the establishment of a Forum for the Future, which should act as a vehicle for development, within the region, of an enhanced partnership for progress, involving governments, civil society and business leaders. We hope there will be a meeting of G8 and regional Foreign Ministers in September to take forward preparations for this. Plans are also in train for G8 Finance Ministers to meet representatives from the region in October to discuss the economic aspects of the Plan of Support. The UK's G8 Presidency next year is an opportunity to ensure progress on implementation of the Plan of Support, with the UK intending to focus on economic reform, education and advancement of women.

Also in June, the EU agreed a new Strategic Partnership for the Mediterranean and Middle East. The UK made a significant input to the development of this plan. The Strategic Partnership sets out the objectives and principles of EU engagement with the region, including increased emphasis on promoting democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights. We are supporting the Dutch Presidency's efforts to mainstream the objectives of the EU Strategic Partnership through EU instruments, and for implementation with the region of the Policy Agenda attached to the Strategic Partnership. Discussions between member states and the Commission on the future shape and objectives of the Commission's aid instruments from 2007 should conclude in 2005, and will be an important

opportunity to ensure the Commission responds effectively to the reform agenda, including through the European Neighbourhood Programme.

We are continuing to develop our engagement with UN bodies on regional reform issues. The FCO has supported the work of the regional office of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, which included assistance in developing an Arab Charter on Human Rights. The FCO is exploring opportunities to support an OECD/UNDP initiative on investment and governance across the Middle East and North Africa region. Through discussions with UN agencies and funds we are helping to develop UN programme activity in support of reform, including, for example, a UNDP rule of law programme in Jordan, Yemen and Morocco, and a UN Fund for Women (UNIFEM) project to promote Arab women's access to and training for parliamentary responsibility in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Syria.

The FCO is restructuring its Middle East and North Africa Directorate to increase its focus on reform, with the appointment of a new Assistant Director heading a new Islamic World Group with lead responsibility for Arab reform issues. The FCO is also dedicating more programme resources to Arab reform. The Engaging with the Islamic World (EIW) Programme of its Global Opportunities Fund, which focuses particularly on good governance, the rule of law and the advancement of women, is increasing its programme spending from £1.5m in 2003/4 to £4m this year and £8m from 2005/6. Our Arab reform activity should also benefit from a category of Chevening Scholarships, which the FCO will introduce from 2005. These new Chevening Fellowships will be short, targeted courses. They will cover issues such as Shari'a and governance, economic governance and reform, the rule of law and democracy, and implementation of human rights commitments. The FCO has also introduced for the Arab world a new themed visits programme in the UK, bringing individuals from different countries together to focus on reform-related issues. The first of these visits, dealing with good governance, is about to go ahead, and we plan to run further visits with themes such as human rights and women. We also plan to launch an Arabic language FCO website that will include information on Arab reform.

DFID is engaged in a wide range of activities to promote reform across the Middle East and North Africa. DFID's regional objectives are a reduction in the impact and likelihood of violent conflict; more effective, accountable and inclusive governance; economic growth benefiting all people in a sustainable way; and more equitable human development. While selected for developmental reasons, these objectives are interconnected with the achievement of the Government's broader objectives on Arab reform. Examples of DFID activity include work on public sector reform in Palestine, Jordan and Iraq; educational reform in Egypt and Yemen, and financial management reform in Palestine and Yemen.

DFID, FCO and MOD, working with Bradford University, have developed a new implementation strategy for their shared Global Conflict Prevention Pool programme for the Middle East and North Africa. The new strategy is more

focused than previous GCPP work on addressing causes of instability within the region.

The British Council is continuing to implement programmes supporting change and reform in education and governance throughout the region, for example in helping the countries of the East Mediterranean to improve the use of ICT in schools, advising on quality, supporting improved English language teaching, and promoting exchange and contacts between media professionals. The Council intends to devote increased funding to this area of work and will develop further projects in 2005 and beyond.

Building on British Council experience, the FCO, DFID, DfES and the Council are working together to develop a strategy in support of educational advancement, which has been identified by many countries in the region as key to their development.











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