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IRAQ: THE DOSSIER

1. I have looked at the "capping" piece for the Iraq dossier as a newspaper sub would. I offer the following suggestions and would be happy to discuss why I believe they will make the document easier for Ministers to defend in interviews.

John Williams
Press Office

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IRAQ

- The threat posed to international peace and security by the spread of **weapons of mass destruction** cannot be ignored. Unless **the international community** face up to the challenge represented by this threat, they place at risk the lives of their own citizens.
- Saddam Hussein's Iraqi regime is a **uniquely** dangerous example of the general threat, both because of his record and his **persistent** flouting of international norms of behaviour. It is important to deal now with the threat he represents.
- Saddam Hussein **is the only modern leader to have used chemical weapons**, against Iran in the war which he initiated in the 1980s, causing [] deaths **and** against Iraqi citizens at Halabja, resulting in several thousand deaths.
- **He has shown his capacity for aggression, by invading** Kuwait, terrorising its people and ransacking the country. [Many thousand] Kuwaiti civilians have never been accounted for and must be presumed to have been killed by forces loyal to Saddam.
- **It was only because of the firm action by the international community that Kuwait was freed. And it was only because of the international community's resolve, through the United Nations, that Saddam Hussein was forced to dismantle some of his weapons of mass destruction.**
- In the 1990s UN Weapons Inspectors worked to implement UN Security Council Resolutions passed following the end of the Gulf conflict, which called for the elimination of Iraqi nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Saddam Hussein worked throughout this period to thwart the efforts of the UN personnel. And even after the US and British Air Forces were deployed in 1998 in operations designed to degrade Iraq's capability to use chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, it was assessed that he retained sufficient materials and technical capacity to rebuild his arsenal.

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- Since then the UN has tried repeatedly to **achieve compliance** with UN Resolutions and accept the return of Weapons Inspectors able to go anywhere at any time in order to track down and destroy his nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and supporting infrastructure.
- At every turn Saddam has **played games with the UN, flouting its authority. He has consistently** sought to divert attention from his failure to comply with the will of the international community. The only reasonable explanation for his prevarication is that he has something to hide, something he is unwilling to give up.
- **We cannot** wait for ever for the right answer from Saddam, when all the time he is engaged in work on weapons which could threaten our own population and certainly the population of his neighbours. If we were to do so, particularly after 11 September, and our patience were to be rewarded with another devastating attack, we would rightly be castigated for our inaction.
- The time has come for Saddam to comply with **international law as** set out most recently in [UNSCR.....] and accept the deployment of UN Weapons Inspectors [or face the consequences].
- This dossier sets out in detail **our best publishable assessment of** the facts about Saddam Hussein's nuclear, biological and chemical weapons capabilities, the history of UN weapons inspections in Iraq and Saddam's record of human rights abuses and aggression towards his neighbours. Taken individually each chapter is damning enough. As a whole they present a picture of a regime which is so opposed to international norms of behaviour that **the threat it poses cannot be ignored.**

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