

Abu Dhabi 134 to FCO: 17 November 2002

SUBJECT: UAE: IRAQ: REACTION TO UNSCR 1441

SUMMARY

1. Widespread recognition that Iraq has been given a last chance to fulfil its obligations, with a desire for it to be given a fair crack of the whip.

DETAIL

OFFICIAL REACTION

2. The only official reaction so far to UNSCR 1441 came when Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Shaikh Hamdan bin Zayed publicly welcomed Iraq's acceptance of SCR 1441 following his meeting with President Chirac in Paris on 15 November. Shaikh Hamdan stressed his hope that Iraqi acceptance would pave the way for the peaceful resolution of the crisis and lead to the eventual lifting of sanctions.

MEDIA REACTION

3. Media comment on UNSCR 1441 has been generally positive. There is recognition that Iraq has been given a last chance to fulfil its international obligations by a united Security Council. There is widespread relief that military action has (for now) been averted and a desire for Iraq to be given fair opportunity to meet its obligations, without the US or UK pre-empting flashpoints as an excuse for military action.

COMMENT

4. UAE Chief of Staff Shaikh Mohamed bin Zayed (MBZ) told me on 9 November that he welcomed the unanimous adoption of UNSCR 1441

[REDACTED]

Originator: [REDACTED] by Firecrest

NIXON

Abu Dhabi 143 to FCO: 08 December 2002

SUBJECT: UAE: IRAQ HUMAN RIGHTS DOSSIER

SUMMARY

1. Instructions in TUR carried out. No official response. Media concentrate on timing of release and subsequent criticism in the UK.

DETAIL

2. We delivered a copy of the dossier to de facto Foreign Minister Shaikh Hamdan bin Zayed under a covering letter from the Charge d'Affaires to coincide with the release in the UK. We also distributed the dossier to press contacts the same day - a public holiday here. Press comment has replayed agency reporting and focussed on the "why now?" question. Criticism by the UK media and Amnesty International has featured prominently.

COMMENT

3. The UAE public are well aware that Saddam Hussein is a bad man.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]. The man on the street (and in the editor's office) [REDACTED] believe that the release of the dossier is intended to crank up justification for future military action and subsequent regime change.

Originator: [REDACTED] by Firecrest

NIXON

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Abu Dhabi 144 to FCO: 11 December 2002

SUBJECT: UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: ANNUAL REVIEW 2002

SUMMARY

1. Insulation from regional turmoil. [REDACTED]
Potential threats from terrorism and Iraq fallout. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

DETAIL

OVERVIEW

2. [REDACTED]

REGIONAL SECURITY

3. [REDACTED]
the possible spillover from military action in Iraq.
[REDACTED]

4. [REDACTED]



BILATERAL

7. Each year regional crises - Afghanistan and counter-terrorism, now Iraq - tend to divert attention from our longer-term bilateral objectives.

OUTLOOK

8. The potential fallout from Iraq apart,

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Abu Dhabi 5 to FCO: 20 January 2003

SUBJECT: UAE: IRAQ [REDACTED]

SUMMARY

1. UAE [REDACTED] urge no military action during the Hajj or Eid al Adha. MEPP takes priority over Iraq in UAE minds.

DETAIL

2. During a call on the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Shaikh Hamdan bin Zayed on 18 January I handed over a copy of our Iraq objectives (TUR). Shaikh Hamdan [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stressed

we should think carefully about military action during the first half of February so as to avoid the Hajj and Eid al Adha.

COMMENT

4. [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED] by Firecrest

NIXON

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Abu Dhabi 10 to FCO: 05 February 2003

SUBJECT: IRAQ CONTINGENCY PLANNING

SUMMARY

1. Some details of British Airways' contingency plans.

DETAIL.

2. According to local BA manager any coalition strike on Iraq will trigger their contingency plan to cease flights to Kuwait, Riyadh and Bahrain. They will put on extra flights to Dubai to uplift passengers who can make their way there on other airlines. Their plan is apparently designed to ensure the safety of their aircraft and passengers and is not linked to the need for war risks insurance cover for their craft.

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Abu Dhabi 20 to FCO: 02 March 2003

SUBJECT: IRAQ CONTINGENCY PLANNING: PHASE IV ASSISTANCE

SUMMARY

1. UAE will contribute to re-building of Iraq post conflict but probably on a bilateral basis. Track record in this area good.

DETAIL

2. The UAE has a good track record on assistance, particularly to Islamic countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Lebanon, Kosovo). This assistance tends to be on a bilateral rather than multilateral basis (they like to get credit for what they give rather than have their donations disappear into a larger pot) and channelled through UAE aid agencies (UAE Red Crescent Society, the Al Maktoum Charitable Foundation or the Mohamed bin Rashid Humanitarian Foundation). In the past the UAE has offered a wide range of skills and projects from field hospitals and refugee camps in Afghanistan to schools and mosques in Sudan and the rebuilding of homes in Jenin and land mine clearance in Lebanon. They also have a history of bringing those requiring medical treatment to the UAE at UAE expense. It is too early to say what assistance they will offer with regard to Iraq and a direct approach is premature. But we can be certain that assistance will be forthcoming, will be generous, and will be high profile.

3. [REDACTED]

4. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] President Sheikh Zayed's overriding concern since the Gulf War has been the suffering of the Iraqi people and this has driven the UAE's Iraq policy.

MCKENZIE

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Abu Dhabi 26 to FCO: 12 March 2003

SUBJECT: IRAQ-PRESSURE ON SADDAM FROM OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS

SUMMARY

1. [REDACTED] We are emphasising the short time that may be available for further UAE action.

DETAIL

2. The latest update on the UAE's proposal [REDACTED] We [REDACTED] emphasise that the Arab action window may be very short. I will reiterate this when I pay my first call on the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Hamdan bin Zayed al Nahyan, which I expect to do shortly.

MAKEPEACE

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Abu Dhabi 27 to FCO: 15 March 2003.

SUBJECT: IRAQ: PRESSURE ON SADDAM FROM OTHER ARAB GOVERNMENTS

SUMMARY

1. UAE Minister of State sees no prospect of effective pressure on Saddam to step down.

DETAIL

2. As foreshadowed in our telno 26 of 12 March, I spoke as instructed when meeting the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Hamdan bin Zayed Al Nahyan (HBZ), to hand over a copy of my credentials on 14 March.

3. HBZ said the Iraqis had told him they were only interested in scenarios with Saddam remaining in power. They were listening to nobody.

4. [REDACTED]

Contact for this telegram: Richard Makepeace (contact via Firecrest).

MAKEPEACE

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Abu Dhabi 28 to FCO: 17 March 2003

SUBJECT: IRAQ: AZORES SUMMIT: LOBBYING

SUMMARY

1. [REDACTED]

DETAIL

2. [REDACTED]

3. We are in continuous dialogue with our interlocutors on Iraq including on the subjects raised in TUR.

Originator: [REDACTED] (contact via Firecrest)

MAKEPEACE

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Abu Dhabi 30 to FCO: 22 March 2003

SUBJECT: UAE/ IRAQ: INTERNAL SECURITY

SUMMARY

1. Increased visible security presence but otherwise business as usual. Joint telegram with Dubai.

DETAIL

2. The UAE presents an image of calm and an attitude of business as usual three days into the military campaign in Iraq. Where the local authorities perceive a potential flashpoint they take pre-emptive action. Extra highly visible security was provided to the embassy during Friday prayers (one of the largest mosques in Abu Dhabi is directly opposite the embassy entrance). UAE airspace and airports remain open. British Airways and Gulf Air flights to London are subject to extra security.

3. The closure of British Council offices is the exception to the rule. So far the British community have remained calm and seem to be taking at least some notice of our advice to maintain a low profile. Callers to the embassies have been seeking reassurance rather than panicking, though rumours are of course rife. Many calls are from the UK wanting advice about whether to go ahead with holidays in Dubai. Registrations are flooding in, 25 - 28,000 over the weekend for Dubai alone, out of a British community in Dubai and the Northern Emirates of around 38,000.

Contact: [REDACTED] by Firecrest

MAKEPEACE

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Abu Dhabi 32 to FCO: 26 March 2003

SUBJECT: UAE: IRAQ SITREP

SUMMARY

1. Little discernible change to life in the UAE. Largely factual reporting from local media. A plea from Abu Dhabi TV. British community on the whole taking heed of travel advice. Joint telegram with Dubai.

DETAIL

2. One week into military action in Iraq there is very little discernible change to life in the UAE. This is how the local authorities would have it. The British community is generally taking notice of our travel advice and keeping a low profile. Public protests have been restricted to a handful of small, officially sanctioned demonstrations organised by colleges and universities across the Emirates. Most local interlocutors hope for a quick victory for allied forces, with minimal civilian casualties and the removal of Saddam. Local authorities are investigating an e-mail sent to individuals at the Higher Colleges of Technology giving US, UK and Australian citizens forty eight hours to leave the country or face the consequences. Speculation is that this is a scare tactic rather than a serious threat.

3.

[REDACTED]

4.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

5. Press reporting is, as ever, based on agency reporting. We have come in for criticism in some editorials particularly from Al Bayan and Al Khaleej. [REDACTED]

Contacts: [REDACTED] by Firecrest.

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