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Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2006 3:34:17 PM
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Subject: HMA's briefing to EU HoMs
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Sarah,

1. The Ambassador briefed EU HoMs at a scheduled meeting at the Austrian Embassy this morning. He delivered the following statement, which was cleared in advance with John Sawers.

Statement begins

I thought you might welcome a briefing from me about the visit to Pristina and Belgrade by John Sawers our Political Director.

Perhaps I should begin with a little background about what led John to visit at this time. At the Contact Group meeting in Vienna on 16 January, following discussion with Martti Ahtisaari, it was agreed that there was a direct relationship between the private and public messages given to both Belgrade and Pristina on Kosovo: if the public messages were soft, the private ones needed to be correspondingly robust.

The Contact Group met again at Ministerial level in London on 31 January. France was represented by Laboulaye (Political Director), Italy by Guilo Terzi (Political Director), Germany by Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Russia by Foreign Minister Lavrov, the US by Nick Burns (Political Director) and the UK by the Foreign Secretary. The meeting was also attended by representatives from the EU Commission, Javier Solana, Austrian Presidency, NATO, UN Secretary General, Soren Jessen-Peterson. US representative to the status process Frank Wisner and Martti Ahtisaari. They collectively discussed and agreed what the public messages should be, which were then issued in a statement, which I'm sure you have all seen - but I have copies here that I will circulate.

At the meeting, Ahtisaari said he needed the Contact Group to deliver private messages on his behalf to Belgrade and Pristina in order to keep up momentum in the status process. His key messages, which I will read in full, were:

- The unconstitutional abolition of Kosovo's autonomy in 1989 and the ensuing tragic events resulting in the international administration of Kosovo have led to a situation in which a return of Kosovo to Belgrade's rule is not a