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Powell: U.S. Hopes for Iraq Resolution in "Very Near Future"

U.S. circulates revised draft to U.N. Security Council members

By David Anthony Denny
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- As the United States presented its revised draft resolution on Iraq to the U.N. Security Council October 2, Secretary of State Colin Powell told reporters in Washington that he hopes the resolution will be adopted "in the very near future."

Briefing reporters at the State Department's Foreign Press Center October 2, Powell said the United States had distributed copies of the draft resolution the previous evening to the five permanent members of the Security Council, and that the ten elected Council representatives would receive a copy October 2.

The secretary also handled questions about Iraq and the U.N.'s role there, Cyprus, Turkey, Kashmir, Israel and the Palestinians, and North Korea.

Powell said that he had met with more than 100 foreign ministers gathered in New York September 22-26 for the start of the U.N. General Assembly, and that "[t]he major item of ... discussion ... was the situation in Iraq." The U.S. approach in the new draft resolution on Iraq, Powell said, "simply is to make it clear in the language of the resolution that the United States is anxious to return full authority to the Iraqi people as quickly as is possible, but at the same time, recogniz-

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ing that much work has to be done before one can do that."

Recognizing that "the U.N. has a very major role to play," in Iraq, Powell said that the resolution "also talks about a role for the U.N. secretary general and the special representative [that is] broader than the current role."

Powell noted the progress made in many areas of rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure, including roads, electricity, water, sewage, schools, and hospitals. However, he continued, "the security situation is the area that requires considerably more work, and that's why now you will see us expedite the training of Iraqi policemen and the raising of an Iraqi national army, so that Iraqis can become increasingly responsible for their own security."

Asked about the pending donors conference for Iraq, Powell said the World Bank "will be giving its estimate out," and that the United States has "asked for $20 billion on top of the monies we have already spent. I wouldn't expect that the international community could match that number, but we hope they will do the best they can."

Regarding the role of the multinational coalition force in the revised draft resolution, Powell said, "[W]e view the multinational force as having the imprimatur of the United Nations. ... But it still has to be a force under single authority to be an effective force, and that single authority must be in the presence of a U.S. commander, since we are the bulk of the force there and the only one with ... an ability to command such a force."

On the possibility of Turkish forces joining the coalition force, Powell said, "[W]e hope that the Turkish government, Turkish parliament, will find it appropriate to provide forces to the multinational force."

The secretary also responded to questions on the following issues:

-- Israel's building a security fence "presents a problem" in President Bush's view. "And to the extent that the fence intrudes on Palestinian land, that problem is exacerbated," he said.

-- With respect to the PKK/KADEK (Kurdistan Workers Party/Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress), the United States "consider(s) them to be terrorist organizations, and we have assured the Turkish government that we see them no other way," he said.

-- As for North Korea's latest announcement that it is planning to use reprocessed nuclear fuel rods to build its nuclear weapons, "[T]he North Koreans go out of their way to make these statements from time to time, and we will continue to pursue diplomacy and not react to each and every one of their statements which seem to be a repeat of the previous statement."

-- Concerning cross-border terrorism across the line of control between India and Pakistan in the province of Kashmir, Powell said, "We have condemned cross-border terrorism. And it's a matter of discussion with our Indian and Pakistani colleagues at every opportunity. ... [But] there is still room, I believe, for the two parties to engage in dialogue and find ways to go forward."

-- On the issue of Cyprus, Powell said he had met with the Turkish and Greek foreign ministers, and that "I told them that we believe that the plan put forward by Secretary General Kofi Annan is a good basis for discussions and we hope that both parties will continue to see the Annan plan in that light."

U.S. Presents Revised Iraq Resolution to U.N. Security Council

Negroponte says draft clarifies pace of power transfer to Iraqis

By Judy Aita
Washington File United Nations Corresepondent

United Nations -- The United States has given the Security Council a revised resolution on Iraq that offers clarification on the issue of Iraqi sovereignty, U.S. Ambassador John Negroponte said October 2.

"Our text seeks to clarify that Iraqi sovereignty resides with the state of Iraq and that the issue at hand is the pace of Iraqi assumption of authority and responsibility for their own affairs," Negroponte told journalists after a closed Security Council meeting during which he presented the new draft.

Negroponte, who is president of the council for the month of October, said that council members exchanged ideas and posed questions about the draft. The other 14

members will be "soliciting reactions from the capitals," he said, and a second meeting has been scheduled for October 6.

"We think it deserves strong support," the ambassador said. "A couple of delegations have already offered to co-sponsor it at this stage."

"We're encouraged by what we see to be an emerging convergence among the 15 members of the Security Council," said Negroponte, who is the chief U.S. representative to the U.N.

"We all recognize the importance of restoring security and fostering a successful economic recovery for Iraq. We all agree that Iraqis must move quickly and in an orderly fashion towards full assumption of authority and responsibility and that the international community must do everything possible to support this crucial process. The success of the Iraqi people in building a prosperous, stable, and representative Iraq is in everybody's interest," he said.

At a press conference in Washington October 2, Secretary of State Colin Powell said that the U.S. approach to the resolution "simply is to make it clear in the language ... that the United States is anxious to return full authority to the Iraqi people as quickly as possible, but at the same time, recognizing that much work has to be done before one can do that."

"Ministries have to come up, institutions have to be in place, a constitution has to be in place, otherwise, what are you resting the nation on? To whom are you giving authority, and with what authority will they act unless it's the authority contained in the constitution and unless the people in charge of executing that constitution have the legitimacy of a election based on that constitution," Powell said.

"That takes time, and as much as we would all like to see it happen tomorrow, it will take time," the secretary of state said.

The United States initially circulated a draft resolution that included, among other things, an expanded role for the United Nations and a start of the process toward Iraqi self government in August. The draft has been the subject of intense negotiations during the opening of the General Assembly in September when President Bush, other heads of state and foreign ministers were in New York for the session. The new draft is a result of those talks.

Negroponte said that in the new version the United States clarifies the sovereignty issue and "reinforces the goal that all of us share: that the day when Iraqis govern themselves must come quickly."

The text also urges the Iraqis to complete their political transition process expeditiously, and it includes numerous references to "the desirability of achieving this goal of political transition as quickly as possible," the ambassador said.

The draft resolution underscores the fact that the Coalition Provisional Authority "is temporary and confirms that the coalition remains engaged in the ongoing process of transferring responsibility to the Iraqis as quickly as practicable," he said.

Negroponte said that the United States is "very much in favor" of turning governmental functions over to the Iraqi ministries "as rapidly as we possibly can." He pointed out that the draft "also talks about the evolving structure of the Iraqi government and the importance of transferring tasks and responsibilities carried out by the coalition to those various Iraqi ministries."

The U.S. draft "invites the (Iraqi) Governing Council to propose a timetable ... for the drafting of a constitution, then the subsequent conduct of elections," the ambassador said.

"Details of implementing the framework -- that is going to have to be thrashed out in Baghdad by the Governing Council," he said.

The differences among Security Council members center around the sequence of drafting a constitution, elections, and establishing a government, Negroponte said.

The United States sees the drafting of a constitution first, then holding elections, "and after that and only after that would full governmental functions be handed over to the Iraqis," the ambassador said.

"We believe that is a sound and systematic way forward with respect to the political process," he said.

The revised text also details "an expanded and explicit role for the United Nations, especially in the political

transition process," Negroponte said. In the text, the council would "encourage the secretary general to pursue the specific course of action he proposed in his July 17 report, notably the various tasks enumerated therein drawing on U.N. expertise in the political, economic and humanitarian areas."

"We explicitly define the mission of the multinational force to include the maintenance of security conditions necessary to carry out the political transition process, and we also make clear that the Security Council will review the multinational force's mission once an internationally recognized representative Iraqi government is in place," the U.S. ambassador said.

"We're very mindful of the importance and vital role that the United Nations can play in Iraq and our draft re ects that awareness," Negroponte continued.

Since the August 19 bombing of U.N. headquarters in Baghdad killing 22 people including U.N. special envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello, the United Nations has been redeploying international staff to other countries in the region. Currently only about 30 out of more than 600 staff remain in Iraq. Secretary General Kofi Annan has said that the United Nations can only operate in a secure environment. Without that, "it's going to be extremely difficult for us to take on major responsibilities," he said October 2.

In his July report, the secretary general said that the U.N. could oversee the delivery of humanitarian assistance; help with the political process; implement the rehabilitation of the courts and support a Judicial Training Center; establish an Iraqi media center; help assess economic reconstruction and development projects; and help the Iraqi interim administration rejoin the international community.

Negroponte said that the United States is "mindful of the very difficult security situation."

"One of the objectives (of the resolution) is to encourage the restoration of stability and security in Iraq as quickly as possible -- both through the actions of the coalition, through the actions of other countries that are now, or in the future, willing to contribute forces to Iraq, and through the training of their security forces," he said.

"Clearly, security conditions have to be sufficient for (the U.N.) to be able to operate there. Everybody is working very hard on that," the ambassador added. "But we would hope those conditions will exist in the very near future."

The resolution would also provide for the multinational force to be under a U.N. authorized unified command, but it would not be a U.N.-directed, or so-called blue helmet, operation, the ambassador pointed out. The United States would command the force and report periodically to the Security Council on the exercise of the force's duties, Negroponte said.

"Nobody has suggested this be a blue helmet or U.N. operation. That has been the concept from the outset," he said.

Progress in Iraq, Afghanistan Under-Reported, USAID's Natsios Says

Addresses session celebrating advances of women in development

By Kathryn McConnell
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The scope and success of the United States' reconstruction and development efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan are not being fully reported by the mainstream media, says Andrew Natsios, administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

One little-reported success in Iraq, for instance, is the agency's hiring of 55,000 Iraqis now working with various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and contractors on projects ranging from distributing food, repairing schools and managing seaport access to restoring basic services such as water, sewage treatment, ground transportation, electricity, and health care, he said.

Natsios made the remarks at an October 1 meeting of the U.S. Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid. He added that the international airport in Baghdad is being repaired and is expected to open soon and that national electrical generation had reached nearly 4,000 megawatts by September 28 and is expected to reach 6,000 megawatts before the spring of 2004.

The Washington gathering, which commemorated the 30th anniversary of the Percy Amendment, heard updates of USAID's accomplishments and future plans for both Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as presentations on the status of women in international development worldwide. The Percy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 directs that women be integrated into all foreign aid programs and prohibits the establishment of a separate assistance program for women.

Security, while a concern in parts of both Iraq and Afghanistan, is not a serious concern in all parts of either, Natsios emphasized. He noted that USAID works out of five offices in Iraq -- a headquarters in Baghdad and other offices in Hillah, Basra, Mosul and Arbil. He added that the agency's projects in Iraq and Afghanistan tend to be national in scope and concentrated in areas where most people live.

Helping to establish local governance in Iraq is one of USAID's priorities, Natsios said. He pointed to 830 "rapid response grants" worth $40 million USAID has made already to foster local governance and civil society. These grants have funded the establishment of more than 200 neighborhood advisory councils and 74 community associations that focus on rebuilding services at the community level.

The agency has also helped 40 ministries function again by replacing office equipment that was looted or destroyed after the Baathist Party's removal from power, Natsios said.

With Iraq's child mortality rates now higher than India's because of the former regime's harsh discrimination in providing access to food, water and sanitation, and health care services, USAID has stepped in to provide funding for 4.2 million vaccinations, 3 million rehydration salts, and training for nurses. The agency's focus on children includes funding the rehabilitation of 1,500 schools in time for the start of the school year October 4, he said.

In the economic reconstruction of Afghanistan, USAID's focus is on promoting agriculture, creating conditions for needed private investment, improving people's lives through the provision of basic services, and reconstituting the basic institutions of a national government, Natsios said.

As part of the latter effort, he said, the agency established day care centers in ministry buildings so that women civil servants would feel free to come to work.

He said there is "steady progress" on the road linking Kabul to Kandahar with a project completion target date of June 2004. The road "will have a big role in tying the country together" and is already affecting people's health as they -- particularly pregnant women -- gain better access to hospitals in the cities. Another ring-road around the country is also being constructed, he said.

During the past two fiscal years, USAID has completed or has still in progress a total of 785 projects in Afghanistan, he said.

Speaking at the meeting about the role of women in development, Julia Taft, director of the United Nations Development Program's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, said it is essential that women be included in all aspects of development decision-making. She added that in post-con ict decommissioning programs, which are mostly geared to getting weapons out of men's hands, women also should get social and economic "reentry assistance." The toll on women, who must lead households and earn incomes during con icts, is great, she added. One way to help women in post-con ict situations is to provide more women with access to microcredits and property rights, she said.

Emmy Simmons, assistant USAID administrator for economic growth, agriculture and trade, said it's important for the international donor community to listen closely to women's organizations in emerging economies. Women's groups, rare in developing countries when the Percy Amendment was adopted, now ourish, she said. "Women figured out that by working together their voices are stronger and they can have better access to aid," Simmons said.

While donors have made great strides in including women in development plans, "gender inequality continues to be pervasive and persistent" throughout the world, requiring continued donor attention to the issue, Alfredo Sfeir-Younis, a senior adviser at the World Bank, said at the meeting. He said it will be "impossible" to achieve the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals to halve poverty and persistent hunger by 2015 unless all countries allow women to be more involved in their political and economic institutions.

Natsios also reported that the U.S. Global Development Alliance (GDA), established in May 2001, completed 78 projects in fiscal year 2003. GDA partners private firms, foundations, educational institutions and nongovernmental organizations in the United States with development

partners in poor countries. "If you're not involved in GDA, you're missing something," he told his audience.

Report on Public Diplomacy in the Muslim World Advocates Changes

Report says U.S. has "failed to listen and failed to persuade"

By David Shelby
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- An October 1 report from the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World concludes that "We have failed to listen and failed to persuade."

The report, which was requested by the House Subcommittee on Appropriations and commissioned by Secretary of State Colin Powell, follows a number of governmental and private sector studies executed over the past two years, looking at U.S. efforts to communicate with audiences in the Arab and Muslim world. Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs and Ambassador to Syria and Israel Edward Djerejian led the inquiry.

Members of the group visited Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Senegal and Morocco and held teleconferences with individuals in Pakistan and Indonesia in the course of their three-month study of U.S. public diplomacy efforts and Arab and Muslim attitudes toward to the United States.

"We have not taken the time to understand our audience," the report asserts, "and we have not bothered to help them understand us. We cannot afford such shortcomings."

One of the primary criticisms by the report is the absence of an American voice in the arena of public discourse. "Often, we are simply not present to explain the context and content of national policies and values." This is a result of the insufficient number of U.S. officials with adequate language skills to effectively engage people from the region in public forums and on television, it says.

The group cites an observation it heard in Morocco: "If you do not define yourself in this part of the world, the extremists will define you."

The report goes on to say that the extremists have defined us "as ruthless occupiers in Iraq and as bigots, intolerant to Muslims in our own country. These depictions are dead wrong, but they stick because it is rare that governments or individuals in the region are prepared to take up our side of the story and because the United States has deprived itself of the means to respond effectively -- or even to be a significant part of the conversation."

The absence of an American voice in the regional discourse not only puts the United States at a disadvantage in explaining specific policies but also results in an inability to place those policies within a larger context of America's foreign activities, it says.

The group reported, for example, "We were told repeatedly during our visit to Cairo that Egyptians were grateful to the Japanese for building their opera house. But they were unaware that the United States funded the Cairo sewer, drinking water and electrical systems and played a key role in reducing infant mortality in Egypt."

At the same time, the report maintains that "public diplomacy needs new and efficient feedback mechanisms that can be brought to bear when policy is made." Insisting that we need to assess the impact of specific policies, the group notes that "without such assessment, our policies could produce unintended consequences that do not serve our interests."

The report notes that "our adversaries' success in the struggle of ideas is all the more stunning because American values are so widely shared. As one of our Iranian interlocutors put it, 'Who has anything against life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?'"

The Advisory Group offered a number of recommendations to confront the negative public opinions in the region. It calls for greater human and financial resources to be channeled into engaging the Arab and Muslim world in an intelligent and respectful dialogue and promoting intercultural understanding.

Specifically, the report argues that the United States needs to cultivate its ability to address the people of the region in their own languages and provide an American voice to the media discourse, particularly focusing on television and emerging Internet technologies.

The report also notes that people within the region have a high regard for the American educational system. "Many especially admire modern education because it

takes them away from the rote memorization that characterizes traditional methods of learning and moves them toward more critical ways of thinking," it says. "Education gives young people access to the global economy and in many instances delivers them from poverty."

The group suggests that the United States could capitalize on this by offering more scholarships to students from the region and establishing more partnerships between American schools and schools in the region. It also advocates the translation and publishing of up-to-date American texts into the languages of the region.

Similarly, the group asserts that the support of American Studies programs in foreign universities and the establishment of American -- Arab and interfaith dialogue programs at American universities could help to bridge the gap in understanding.

The report also supports other citizen exchange programs to facilitate professional and personal interaction between Americans and people from the Arab and Muslim world.

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