

AANVULLING FACTS AND REPORTS NO. 13 – SEPTEMBER 2002

US Department of State

Powell begins talks on UN Iraqi resolution

13 september 2002

United Nations -- The U.N. Security Council will begin discussing the details of a resolution to deal with Iraqi non-compliance with its Gulf War cease-fire demands, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said September 13.

"All the members of the council are now seized with the issue and recognize the challenge that Iraq does present to international law and to the mandate of the Security Council and they understand we cannot continue in this manner," Powell told journalists after his meetings with council members.

The secretary said that beginning the week of September 16, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Negroponte will take the lead in talking with council members on the elements of a new resolution or resolutions.

"We haven't written a resolution and we haven't come to a judgment on what will be in a resolution yet," Powell said.

"But one thing I'm reasonably sure of, is that whatever resolution we do come up with must have a deadline to it."

"It cannot be a resolution such as the resolutions in the past where they are issued and there is no subsequent action to comply or to be made to comply with the terms of the resolution," he said.

Response To Bush's UN Speech "Quite Favorable," Says Armitage

13 September 2002

[...] Stressing that the administration has yet to decide on a course of action, [Deputy Secretary of State] Armitage said that in the case of war, the United States "would like others, if it's necessary to fight, to join us in that fight. We'd also like others to help us in the aftermath of Iraq. There will be a day after and there will be work for all of us in the international community". [...]

NBC

Interview with Secretary Of State Colin L. Powell

On NBC's Meet the Press - September 15, 2002

Russert: How much time are you giving the United Nations Security Council to act? A few weeks?

Powell: I think it's a matter of weeks and not months, otherwise we'll just be dribbling this along. So it's a matter of weeks. Now, I don't want to be more precise than that because drafting UN resolutions is not one of the easiest things in the world to do, and then get the necessary votes for it.

Russert: And in the resolution, how much time would Saddam Hussein have to comply with the demand to readmit inspectors?

Powell: This is something we'll have to discuss within the Security Council, but it too will be a relatively short timeline.

[...]

Russert: If, in fact, he did allow the inspectors to come back in and he did cooperate, could we have disarmament without regime change?

Powell: The fundamental issue that got us to the regime change policy was not -- disarmament certainly was number one, but there are a number of other elements in these UN resolutions: oppression of minorities, returning of Kuwaiti prisoners and other prisoners to include accounting for an American pilot who was lost. There are many other conditions that would also have to be looked at, and that might be the subject of yet another resolution.

But I think if we got to that point where reasonable people could say we're disarmed -- and I'm not sure it's just inspectors alone that can make that determination -- we'll have to see where we are at that point.

Russert: So Saddam Hussein could save himself by disarming?

Powell: I am not going to go that far. Our policy remains regime change.

LA Times

Iraq Lists Conditions for U.N. Inspections

From Reuters - September 15 2002

Baghdad -- Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tarik Aziz said Saturday that Baghdad would let U.N. weapons inspectors return only under a comprehensive deal that would prevent a U.S. attack and lift crippling 12-year-old sanctions.

Aziz held a news conference to respond to President Bush's speech to the United Nations General Assembly on Thursday. Bush said action against Iraq would be inevitable unless the world body forced Baghdad to eliminate weapons of mass destruction.

"If there is a solution which maintains Iraq's sovereignty, dignity and legitimate rights and prevents aggression, we are ready," Aziz said. But he said Iraq would prevent inspectors returning if "there is no honest, balanced and credible formula that will take us to the truth."

He accused Washington and London of blocking efforts to resolve the inspections issue.

Aziz said he feared that if inspectors are readmitted, a crisis over their activities could soon arise that the U.S. would exploit as a pretext to attack. He cited the U.S.-British bombing campaign in December 1998 as an example. The two Western allies attacked Iraq for four days during that month for Iraq's alleged failure to cooperate with U.N. weapons monitors. The inspectors left Iraq on the eve of that attack and have not been allowed back.

"We are facing the same situation as we faced in 1998. Continuous accusations are being made in Washington and London," Aziz said.

He said U.N. inspectors, responsible for accounting for any weapons of mass destruction that Iraq might have, were in Iraq for 7 1/2 years but had found no prohibited weapons. "They made thousands of inspections ... but they did not find anything."

Aziz renewed an invitation to U.S. lawmakers to visit sites suspected of producing weapons of mass destruction. "You can bring all the experts ... and you can bring all the equipment you need to search for the truth," he said.

He also rejected Bush's charges that Baghdad is developing weapons of mass destruction, harboring terrorist groups and posing a threat to its neighbors. "Those accusations are a pretext to justify unjustifiable aggression and invasion of Iraq," he said.

Aziz also denied any link with Al Qaeda but said there is a group of Islamic extremists in the northern area of Sulaymaniyah--outside the control of his government.

"We don't know if they belong to Al Qaeda or not," he said. Northern Iraq has been outside the Baghdad's control since soon after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. Kurdish factions rule the region.

Aziz said Washington wanted to attack his nation to control "the riches of Iraq," a reference to oil.

CNN

Powell says it's too late for Iraq to negotiate

15 September 2002

WASHINGTON (CNN) -- Secretary of State Colin Powell said Sunday that U.N. weapons inspectors must be allowed to go "anywhere, anytime" if they returned to Iraq -- rejecting that country's conditional offer to allow inspections to resume.

"If they have no weapons, what are they hiding?" Powell said on CNN's "Late Edition With Wolf Blitzer."

"They find all kinds of excuses, a thousand excuses -- There are spies on this team. We don't want this. When are sanctions going to be relieved and removed?" The issue is Iraqi noncompliance, and we should not allow them to move us off that issue." [...]

UN News Centre

Press conference by European Union

13 September 2002

The Foreign Minister of Denmark, speaking on behalf of the European Union Presidency, briefed correspondents on the Union's activities in New York at a Headquarters press conference today. [...] On the issue of Iraq -- Dr. Moeller praised the speech of United States President George W. Bush to the General Assembly yesterday. The Union fully shared the President's concern with Iraq's continued defiance and with its weapons of mass destruction. The Union greatly valued President Bush's decision to address the problem of Iraq multilaterally. The Union also valued the forceful statement of United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Iraq had been at the centre of the Union's discussions with the United States, Russia and China. The Union shared the commitment to enforce international legal order through the Security Council and he urged the Council to face its responsibilities.

UN Security Council

Statement of Permanent Five Foreign Ministers

13 September 2002

[...] The Ministers discussed the Iraqi issue. They agreed that Iraqi non-compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions is a serious matter and that Iraq must comply. The Ministers have begun consultations on how the Security Council can deal with the issue to ensure implementation of its resolutions. [...]

Split on Iraq Emerges in the United Nations

September 15, 2002

By Julia Preston

United Nations, Sept. 14 — With some American allies forcefully reaffirming their support for the United States' campaign to persuade the United Nations to bear down on the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, differences with other influential nations emerged sharply today.

In Britain's strongest statement yet on the issue, the foreign secretary, Jack Straw, said in a Sky Television interview to be broadcast Sunday that Mr. Hussein's government will have to fall if it does not comply with Security Council resolutions requiring it to rid itself of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons.

"Either he deals with those weapons of mass destruction or his regime will have to end," Mr. Straw said. "But the choice is his, and he hasn't got much time to make up his mind."

In an address today to the General Assembly, Mr. Straw closely echoed President Bush's appeal here on Thursday, saying, "The authority of the United Nations itself is at stake."

In contrast, Germany's foreign minister, Joschka Fisher, who spoke soon after, said that Germany was "full of deep skepticism" about the United States' threat of military action to topple Mr. Hussein if he did not abide by United Nations resolutions. Contending that international efforts to fight terror, rebuild Afghanistan and calm the conflict in the Middle East could be destabilized by a military strike against Iraq, he appealed for a diplomatic solution.

President Bush, who met at Camp David today with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy, noted in his weekly radio broadcast that Congress was scheduled to begin debate on the Iraq issue next week, and added, "Congress must make it unmistakably clear that when it comes to confronting the growing danger posed by Iraq's efforts to develop or acquire weapons of mass destruction, the status quo is totally unacceptable."

After an initial warm response to President Bush's decision to work through the United Nations to confront Iraq, many nations were more vocal about their reluctance to use a military force to topple the Iraqi leader.

Late on Friday, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan said in a news conference here that he had told President Bush in a meeting earlier that "the use of force is a last resort when there are no other options." While not a Security Council member this year, Japan is a politically important voice at the United Nations.

Now that the Bush administration is engaged with the Security Council on the issue, American diplomats, led by Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, face a tricky task to craft a new resolution that will not go beyond the limited aim of most Council members to bring new pressure on Iraq for the inspectors' return. To meet Washington's goal, the resolution must also leave the way open for the United States to spearhead military action.

After a closed meeting here, the foreign ministers of the Arab Group declined to issue any joint appeal to Iraq to allow the return of the inspectors.

Only Egypt pressed Iraq's foreign minister, Naji Sabri, forcefully to readmit the inspectors, while others did not respond to an appeal by Secretary General Kofi Annan for help in getting them back in. The inspectors were withdrawn in late 1998 in advance of an American and British bombing raid on Baghdad, and have been barred by Iraq since. [...]

American diplomats, who have been pressing their case on all fronts, have made significant progress with Russia, a permanent, veto-bearing member of the Security Council. On Friday Russia issued a new warning to Iraq, saying that it would face consequences if it did not comply with United Nations resolutions.

A senior Bush administration official who negotiated with the Russians this week said the main argument has been economic. The message to the Russians, he said, is that "they're a lot more likely to get their debts paid off and have a better commercial relationship with Iraq if it's part of the international community again."

The official said the United States had not made specific offers, but did not rule out the possibility of negotiating explicit guarantees for Russian interests, mostly oil-related.

One area where differences loomed between the United States and other Council countries was over the role of the weapons inspectors. Many Council nations wanted to see a new measure that would secure the return of the inspectors and also allow them enough time to conduct substantial inspections. That could take at least six months, according to timetables laid out in earlier resolutions.

The Bush administration has outlined a much shorter time frame to see if Mr. Hussein has dismantled his weapons of mass destruction. In an interview on Wednesday, Hans Blix, the leader of the team of inspectors in charge of checking for biological and chemical weapons and long-range missiles, acknowledged that there were some limitations to what his team could accomplish even if it was allowed to return.

Mr. Blix said his inspectors might not be able to detect mobile laboratories for producing biological weapons materials, or underground storehouses for weapons substances, if the inspectors did not have information about such sites from the last time they were in Iraq or have not seen traces of them in satellite surveillance photography.

Mr. Blix said he had no evidence at this time that Iraq had such mobile units or storage depots or had pressed ahead with a prohibited weapons program. But he said he could not draw conclusions without inspections.

He argued that the presence of the weapons inspectors in Iraq would have great value because it would make it difficult for Mr. Hussein to complete production and placement of such weapons.

"If they were actually trying to pursue a program, then such an effort would become much more difficult if you have inspectors that are entitled to go anywhere in the country at any time without delay," Mr. Blix said.

The Guardian

Leading Labour backbenchers renew criticism of war plans

Backlash Rebels focus on risks of wider conflict

Richard Norton-Taylor and Anne Perkins - Saturday September 14, 2002

Senior Labour backbenchers have renewed their warnings against involvement in any war against Iraq without a United Nations mandate.

Chris Smith, the former culture secretary, has accused President Bush of using the UN as an excuse for going to war with Iraq, and said Britain risked being swept along in the slipstream of the United States. Gerald Kaufman, the former shadow foreign secretary, warned that even with a UN resolution there was a risk of provoking widespread conflict in the Middle East.

The warnings came as the Ministry of Defence yesterday insisted no decision had yet been taken on the deployment of British troops for any military action in Iraq. The MoD was forced to make the statement in an effort to quell speculation in the media that advance parties of troops were preparing to fly to the Gulf within weeks, that RAF leave had been cancelled and that British fighter deployments in Turkey were being beefed up.

With revolt threatening on the Labour party's previously quiescent national executive, Mr Smith, normally a loyalist, said in an interview to be broadcast on GMTV tomorrow: "I hope that the cabinet will be saying to the prime minister 'you know, hang on a moment, it's British interests, it's global interests that matter primarily here, it's not just American interests' ... My sense is that the Labour party overwhelmingly is extremely anxious about what is happening here. People don't think that we should be thinking about going gung ho into a military conflict here."

Mr Kaufman told the BBC's One to One that even with an international consensus against him in the Gulf war 10 years ago, Saddam Hussein had attacked Israel. "You can take for granted he will attack Israel again. The difference is in 1991 Israel had a prime minister that was ready to listen to the US's calls for restraint," he said.

Yesterday a senior MoD official moved to dampen fears of a military build-up. "No decisions have been taken by the government on the deployment of British forces. Yes, there is contingency planning going on but that is what the military routinely undertake, looking at the 'what ifs'. However, this is very far from confirming that a particular plan of action has been agreed," he said.

Straw steps up warnings to Saddam

Nicholas Watt, political correspondent - Monday September 16, 2002

Speaking from New York, where he is attending the UN general assembly, the foreign secretary Jack Straw said: "Either [Saddam Hussein] deals with those weapons of mass destruction or his regime will have to end. The choice is his and he hasn't got much time to make up his mind." Mr Straw qualified his remarks by making clear that Iraq could avoid military action if it complied with a new UN security council resolution which Britain hopes will call for the inspectors to be given unfettered access. "Allowing [the inspectors] to do their job without restrictions and without conditions - then the case for military action recedes to the point almost of invisibility," he told BBC's Breakfast with Frost programme.

[...]

Tony Blair will attempt to win round wavering Labour backbenchers and a sceptical British public when the government publishes a dossier outlining the threat posed by Iraq. The dossier will be published at 8am on Tuesday week, giving MPs a few hours to read the document before they debate the crisis at an emergency sitting of the commons. Government sources yesterday rejected reports in the Sunday Telegraph that the dossier would link Iraq to al-Qaida. It is understood that it will concentrate on Iraq's attempts to develop nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Mr Straw gave a taste of what would be in the dossier when he said it would include a digest of information that is already available and fresh intelligence details. "There will be as much of the product of intelligence as we can safely reveal," he said.

What Baghdad said in letter to Kofi Annan

Message from Iraq's foreign affairs minister to UN

Tuesday September 17, 2002

Dear Secretary-General,

I have the honour to refer to the series of discussions held between Your Excellency and the Government of the Republic of Iraq on the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions on the question of Iraq which took place

in New York on 7 March and 2 May and in Vienna on 4 July 2002, as well as the talks which were held in your office in New York on 14 and 15 September 2002, with the participation of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States. I am pleased to inform you of the decision of the Government of the Republic of Iraq to allow the return of the United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq without conditions.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq has responded, by this decision, to your appeal, to the appeal of the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, as well as those of Arab, Islamic and other friendly countries.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq has based its decision concerning the return of inspectors on its desire to complete the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and to remove any doubts that Iraq still possesses weapons of mass destruction.

This decision is also based on your statement to the General Assembly on 12 September 2002 that the decision by the Government of the Republic of Iraq is the indispensable first step towards an assurance that Iraq no longer possesses weapons of mass destruction and, equally importantly, towards a comprehensive solution that includes the lifting of sanctions imposed in Iraq and the timely implementation of other provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 687(1991). To this end, the Government of the Republic of Iraq is ready to discuss the practical arrangements necessary for the immediate resumption of inspections.

In this context, the Government of the Republic of Iraq reiterates the importance of the commitment of all Member States of the Security Council and the United Nations to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Iraq, as stipulated in the relevant Security Council resolutions and article (II) of the Charter of the United Nations. I would be grateful if you would bring this letter to the attention of the Security Council members.

Please accept, Mr Secretary-General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Dr Najji Sabri

Minister of Foreign Affairs - Republic of Iraq

BBC

Iraq offer receives mixed reaction

17 September 2002

Iraq says it is ready to readmit UN weapons inspectors, but the US has dismissed the offer as a tactical ploy. Here is a roundup of international reaction.

Britain expressed scepticism, warning that Iraq had a history of playing games.

Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, in New York to meet U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, was equally sceptical.

"Inspectors and supervision only work with honest people," he told Israel Radio from New York, where he is meeting UN Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"Dishonest people know how to overcome this easily. Anyway, we have to remember that the secretary-general presented a few other demands, this is not the only demand."

But **Russia** welcomed the move and said the threat of war had been averted.

"Thanks to our joint efforts, we managed to avert the threat of a war scenario and go back to political means of solving the Iraqi problem," Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said.

The Foreign Minister of **France**, Dominique de Villepin said the council "must now hold Saddam Hussein to his word."

China's foreign minister Tang Jiaxuan expressed relief over the Iraqi move.

"The Iraqi decision is what the international community, including China, has always hoped to see," Mr Tang said in an interview at the United Nations in New York with Xinhua news agency.

The United States, Britain, France, Russia and China are the United Nations Security Council's five permanent members with veto power

In **Malaysia**, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said the West should reward Iraq's willingness to readmit inspectors by lifting sanctions.

"Sanctions are hurting not Saddam Hussein," the prime minister said.

"They are hurting a lot of poor people, old people, pregnant mothers. You are not doing anything good by punishing them for something they are not responsible for."

Australia's foreign minister greeted the offer with cautious optimism.

"On the face of it, without wishing to be locked into this position, it does sound like a promising development," Alexander Downer told Southern Cross radio.

New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark called the announcement "a triumph of diplomacy" and said her nation is ready to participate in the UN's weapons inspection mission.

"If the weapons inspectors are allowed to get back in and finish the job, hopefully we can put the issue of Iraq behind us as a threat to the world and get the focus back on some of the other outstanding problems, like Israel and Palestine, which needs the goodwill of the Arab world to be resolved," Ms Clark said.

U.N. Inspectors Can Return Unconditionally, Iraq Says

By Julia Preston and Todd S. Purdum

17 September 2002

UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 16 — Iraq, responding to worldwide pressure after President Bush demanded that it comply with United Nations resolutions, said today that it would allow international weapons inspectors to return "without conditions." [...]

The Bush administration and Britain voiced skepticism about the Iraqi offer. Administration officials said the United States was still determined to seek a strong resolution demanding Iraqi compliance with past resolutions and threatening to act if Baghdad failed to do so.

Iraq's offer followed signs of mounting military pressure. Administration officials said today that British and American warplanes were bombing major air defenses there while patrolling no-flight zones. In addition, there was continuing pressure on the Security Council from Secretary of State Colin L. Powell to demand Iraq's full cooperation with renewed weapons inspections.

"This is a tactical step by Iraq in hopes of avoiding strong U.N. Security Council action," said Scott McClellan, the deputy White House spokesman. "As such, it is a tactic that will fail." He added: "It is time for the Security Council to act."

A senior State Department official said Iraq's letter was "not a promise to disarm, not a promise to allow unfettered inspections, not a promise to disclose the state of its weapons program." [...]

Secretary Powell, pressing ahead with the American proposals for swift action, met today with officials from Syria, Colombia and Mexico, all nations that sit on the Council this year, as well as with representatives of Turkey and Egypt.

The United States clashed today with France, one of its closest allies, over how the Security Council should proceed, as Paris insisted on a two-stage approach that would postpone any threat of military action for several weeks at least. France was calling for a first resolution by the Council demanding unfettered inspections, to be followed later by a measure backing the use of force, depending on Iraq's response. [...]

Mr. Hussein's move seemed likely to deepen the dispute over tactics between the United States and France. Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin, forcefully arguing France's position at a midday news conference, outlined a plan for an initial Council resolution that would only require Iraq to allow the weapons inspections without spelling out any consequences if Baghdad does not comply.

France, one of the five permanent, veto-bearing members of the Council, wants to hold off until later a resolution to authorize the use of military force, depending on how the weapons inspections proceed.

The French plan runs counter to the proposal that Secretary Powell advocated in a day of continual meetings and intense lobbying here. Administration officials said they were seeking one resolution that would both require Iraq's complete cooperation for the inspections and also refer to the consequences of noncompliance, leaving Washington wide leeway to decide if and when to begin a military assault on Iraq.

"We cannot go for two hares at the same time," Mr. de Villepin said, referring to the two proposed resolution elements that are in dispute. "We should look for one, and we get one. If we look for two, we won't catch any one." He argued that the resolution should focus tightly on stopping Iraq's violations of Security Council measures to curb weapons proliferation, and not range into suggestions of overthrowing Mr. Hussein.

Referring to the war to oust the Taliban from Afghanistan, he warned that Iraq "is not as easy as other targets" for a military operation. He also said an attack on Mr. Hussein could inflame public opinion in the Arab world if it is not seen as having the support of the full Security Council.

France said it could persuade the Council to adopt unanimously the first resolution it is proposing.

An administration official argued that the two resolutions would give Mr. Hussein "two opportunities to further embarrass the United Nations."

Before word of the Iraqi offer arrived, American officials said they hoped to begin detailed talks in the Security Council by Wednesday, with the goal of circulating draft language of a resolution by week's end.

Britain's Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, said today after a meeting with Russia's Foreign Minister, Igor S. Ivanov, that they were in agreement about Iraq's violations of Council edicts and also on the need to warn Baghdad of "serious consequences" for those breaches. His comments suggested that both permanent members of the Council would support the single, strong resolution that Washington is proposing.

However, late today Mr. Ivanov welcomed Iraq's agreement for the unconditional return of the arms inspectors, saying that the possibility of military action had been avoided, the Interfax news agency reported Tuesday. [...]