



## PROPOSAL FOR CHANGE IN IRAQ

The international coalition is to be commended for its skill in building up the pressure on Saddam Hussein without a military intervention. Outlined below is a proposal constructing a means whereby the key protagonists in the Iraq crisis may retreat with honour and progress made to improve the lives of Iraq's citizens.

1. The United Nations, in addition to continuing with the strengthened disarmament inspections and monitors, could deploy a force of human rights inspectors and then monitors with an emphasis of obtaining domestic civil rights progress. The inspectors would measure progress of the Iraqi government in carrying out the human rights reforms it says have already begun<sup>1</sup>, and together with the monitors, ensure that progress is made in instituting a process that will lead to a free press and multi-party elections.
2. The threat of force can be used to ensure progress in changing the political and cultural environment within Iraq. The Oil-for-Food Programme, which underwrites the existing regime by giving it power over food distribution, could be revised by sequestering, or using, part of the Iraqi oil revenues as a guarantee against three outcomes:
  - progress on civil rights reforms and movement towards a multi-party system;
  - security guarantees for members of the Iraqi diaspora willing to return
  - no further engagement of Saddam Hussein in Iraqi politics
3. The need to develop a political class within Iraq capable of implementing a new and democratic regime requires the return of Iraqi exiles. By providing guarantees for their security, they could return to play a vital part in the rebuilding of the country and its economy. This cannot be done without the lifting of sanctions. The reason to have sanctions would be eliminated by Iraq's disarmament and progress in human rights.
4. Saddam Hussein could be offered what he might perceive as honourable retirement in the vacation village – called Saddamiat el Tharthar - on which he has lavished luxuries near his home town of Tikrit. He and his family would be under electronic surveillance, and if any member engaged in political or military activities, he would forfeit the honourable nature of his retirement and be liable to arrest for war crimes.
5. The UN will have to install a peace keeping force to prevent violent settling of scores and to ensure the protection of fundamental human rights.

**Positive consequences from this course of action:**

- a. Other Middle Eastern nations are likely to be relieved at such an approach, and to support non-military options in the interests of their own stability.
- b. This is politically viable as the US and UK can take credit for having provided the pressure enabling the Iraqi population to emerge from the fear and horror to which they have been subjected for 22 years.
- c. Whatever the difficulties of pursuing this course, and they should not be underestimated, the moral standards which have been raised in connection with Iraq will have been upheld.
- d. George W. Bush will be able to deny incontrovertibly the charges of empire building

*The above proposals were developed through conversations with specialists in Washington, Baghdad and London.*

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<sup>i</sup> In an interview in January 2003 Tariq Aziz claimed that the Iraqi constitution was being altered in the direction of a multi-party system. This has not yet been verified, but we do know that the various civil rights reforms that he mentioned have been carried out, including:

- reduction of exit visa fee for Iraqis wishing to leave the country from \$200 to \$10
- transformation of the special courts on security violations to which Amnesty International have objected
- amnesty for political prisoners.