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UNITED NATIONS

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TO: NAMBIAR, UNATIONS, NEW YORK
 PASCOE, UNATIONS, NEW YORK
 QAZI, UNAMI, BAGHDAD
 ARBOUR, OHCHR, NEW YORK

NYK, please relay

FROM: ARBOUR, OHCHR, GENEVA

DATE: 11 SEPTEMBER 2007

GVA 1051

NUMBER:

SUBJECT: UNAMI HUMAN RIGHTS QUARTERLY REPORT

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1. Further to USG Qazi's code cable of 4 September and USG Pascoe's of 7 September, I am concerned about the prolonged delay in finalizing the latest UNAMI Human Rights Quarterly Report (covering the period April to June) and in sharing it with the Government of Iraq. I understand it was sent to DPA on 27 August and I have difficulty appreciating the reasons behind the delay in receiving their comments.

2. As I have stated previously, the value of public reports is not only to document and trace human rights developments, but also to serve as a protection tool. To this end, it is essential that public reports be issued promptly and regularly.

3. A principal aim of issuing human rights public reports on a regular basis is to diminish the potential that they are seen as having been politically motivated. This is best achieved by making them a predictable feature of the landscape as well as a standard practice in United Nations integrated missions.

4. We would propose that future reports be concurrently shared by UNAMI with OHCHR and DPA, allowing 3 to 4 working days for comment. Following that internal clearance procedure, reports can then be shared with the host government one week prior to public release. Any specific factual inaccuracies can be corrected and any broader comments acknowledged, as appropriate, by the Human Rights Office in the next report. This approach conforms with the usual practice in place in the majority of human rights field presences for the preparation and issuing of human rights reports.

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5. I believe bringing this reporting more into conformity with usual practice, both in terms of process and content, is essential if we are to minimize the potential for accusations of undue political influence on the content and the timing of the release of these reports.

Best regards.

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