

VISIT OF PRESIDENT CHIRAC: PRESS CONFERENCE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AFTER TALKS ON 15 MAY

1. We had thought that the French might be suggesting some language for the President and the Prime Minister to use on security policy issues during the press conference after the talks at No. 10 on 15 May. Nothing has come to us from Paris and No. 10 have asked what we might suggest.

2. We might go for something straightforward:

"Thanks to the decision of the French Government last December, to move closer to the military side of NATO as it is brought up to date, we can now foresee France directly involved in the full range of NATO activities. Nothing could be more welcome."

You or MOD might have ideas about embellishing a straightforward statement. The best that I have been able to come up with this morning is something along the lines of:

"For years NATO has been rather like a television set which is not connected to its satellite dish. It has given us an excellent service but we have known that an even fuller range of programmes could be made available. French rapprochement offers us that broader vision of NATO."