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Subject: Payment to Participants of Iraq Working Groups

The issue of payment to Iraqi-origin participants in the various Future of Iraq Working Groups for substantive contributions to meetings, particularly papers, has arisen. Therefore, NEA/NGA believes it necessary to enunciate promptly a policy to set parameters to forestall possible competition among individuals for their substantive contributions.

--We consider it essential to avoid the perception that participants are receiving generous payments from the USG, which might have negative consequences both for the participants and for the interests of the US government in post-Saddam Iraq.

--We therefore propose a "expert fee" to certain non-USG working group participants not associated with a funded NGO (such as The Iraq Foundation). Only expert (non-political) Participants in the "Democratic Principles" Working Group would be paid. Such payments would reimburse participants for their expert contributions to the working groups to include:

- a flat fee for the coordinator of each working group;
- NO flat fee for other participants in meetings
- flat fee for drafting and presenting papers to cover administrative costs.

--The last fee listed above would be identical for all invitees and drafters of expert papers, thus eliminating the possibility that concerned individuals would compare their respective remuneration and compete among themselves for higher payments.

-- Any expert fees would be determined according to the scale that NEA/NGA pays to non-governmental organizations that have contracts with NEA for Iraq-related services.

--Such a procedure would also discourage any attempts by relevant individuals to bill the US government for services rendered.

--NGA proposes that all working group participants continue to be reimbursed at current USG levels for air travel, per diem, and meals, incidentals, and expenses (MI&E).

--MI&E would include, in addition to meals and laundry, long distance telephone and fax expenses, cell phone rentals if necessary, and local travel expenses, including travel to and from airports.

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