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4 May 2004

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Dear Stewart

HANDLING EXTREMIST PARTIES IN THE EU

1. Some of you will have been following the work which we did recently on handling extremist parties in Europe, picking up Charles Crawford's reporting of the rise of Lepper in Poland and Ric Todd's analysis of his contacts with Meciar. I attach Simon Manley's submission on the subject and a copy of the Private Secretary's reply, confirming the Foreign Secretary's agreement. This process has established that:
 - You should maintain contacts where you have them with extremist parties: we recognise that such contacts can help in persuading them – particularly those in the new Member States - of the need to respect the fundamental values of the Union, the principles and approach embodied in the acquis, and the expectations of foreign investors;
 - Such contacts should generally be at your level, but we should think carefully, on a case-by-case basis, about contact with visitors from London, whether officials or Ministers. The general rule should be that there should only be such contacts where there is genuine business to do, with potential benefit for the UK;
 - New contacts should be authorised at Team Leader level back in London;
 - Where the politicians or party espouse racist views we shall need to clear those contacts with the PUS and Minister for Europe.

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2. I hope this is helpful. If in doubt about any particular politician or party, don't hesitate to talk to us first.

Yours

Kim Darroch

Kim Darroch
Director General, EU

cc: HMA's EU Posts

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