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PS/No 10

**PRESIDENT CHIRAC'S STATE VISIT: PRESS STATEMENT ON FRANCE/NATO**

You asked for some language on France/NATO which the Prime Minister might use at his press conference with President Chirac after the talks on 15 May.

We and MOD suggest something along the following lines:

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

- For years NATO has been rather like a party at which good wine is served - but no champagne. The wine on offer has been excellent. But we have known that an even fuller range of refreshments could be made available. French rapprochement means that the party will in future have added sparkle.

If this wording strikes you as on the right lines, we could ask our Embassy in Paris to let the French have it in advance. We doubt whether there is time to get formal French agreement to the language. But it would be good to offer them the