## Statement by Mr Auchi

Mr Auchi vigorously disputes the content of this and other articles first published in 2003 in the Observer and the Guardian. He has asked us to attach to the articles the following statement setting out his position:

He was never close to Saddam Hussein or his regime. He never met or even spoke to Saddam Hussein.

Mr Auchi has never to his knowledge had any involvement in money stolen by Saddam Hussein and/or Colonel Gadaffi and he has never sheltered funds for Saddam Hussein.

During the time when Iraq was considered to be a friend of the west, Mr Auchi conducted business with entities in Iraq. On sanctions being imposed against Saddam Hussein's regime, Mr Auchi ceased conducting such business.

Mr Auchi has had no involvement whatsoever in buying or selling arms to Iraq. He had no involvement in the sale of Italian warships to Iraq in 1980 or at any time. As far as Mr Auchi is aware he was not investigated with regard to bribery in post-war Italy.

Mr Auchi did not act as an intermediary for the construction of a pipeline from Iraq to Saudi Arabia. He had no involvement in this contract and received no commission in relation to it.

Mr Auchi was not involved in, and at the time it happened, had no knowledge of the attempted assassination of Abdul Karim Qusim in the 1950s.

Mr Auchi is a passive investor in Orascom owning 2.5% of the company. He had no knowledge of the mobile telephone contract that was awarded to it until after it was publicly announced.

Mr Auchi denies any wrongdoing in relation to the Elf oil scandal and is appealing his conviction. He is also suing Elf for the damage caused to him. When asked to visit France for questioning, he asked for questions to be put in writing and offered to meet the Judge in London. Subsequently, he went to France for questioning of his own volition.

The above is not an exhaustive list of the matters Mr Auchi disputes and says are inaccurate in Observer and Guardian articles published in 2003. Mr Auchi requests that the articles are not relied upon as an accurate source of information about him.