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ICRC BEGINS MEETING WITH DETAINEES AT GUANTANAMO

ANNAN REAFFIRMS NEED FOR BALANCE IN WAR ON TERROR

(U) UNSYG Annan warned governments that counter-terrorism efforts must be balanced with the protection of human rights during a UNSC debate, report the media. The Secretary General's statement was not contentious, comments the mission. Both Annan's address and a UN spokesman's statements reiterate a basic affirmation of principles of international law. (Watch/USUN New York telcon, Reuters)

VOLCANIC DEATH TOLL IN DRC STANDS AT 45

(U) A regional OFDA coordinator and a UN disaster assessment team are scheduled to arrive January 19 to assess relief needs and investigate the accuracy of UN reports of an estimated 45 dead and 200,000 to 500,000 displaced by the volcano's eruption, reports the desk. Most of those displaced fled to Rwanda; the GOR's capacity to assist the refugees is limited. (Watch/Rwanda desk telcon, Reuters)

HAITIAN PRIME MINISTER PROFFERS RESIGNATION

(C) Prime Minister Cherestal had previously been summoned by the Haitian Senate for an anticipated vote of no confidence next week. President Aristide has refused in recent weeks to endorse Cherestal, leaving the PM exposed to scathing criticism for GOH shortcomings, and had declined several months ago to accept Cherestal's resignation. The President's response now is uncertain, given that he may want to use the PM as a bargaining chip in negotiations with the opposition. (*Watch/Haiti desk e-mail*)

AFGHANISTAN HOSTAGE SURFACES IN KARACHI

(U) Ameit Clark Bowers arrived at the Sheraton Hotel in Karachi, claiming to have been tortured and imprisoned by the Taliban, reports the bureau. Consulate officials will meet with Mr. Bowers January 19. (*Watch/Consular Affairs bureau e-mail*)

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