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EUR Press Guidance
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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(D)

ELIA

BOSNIA: TRANSFER OF SIX DETAINEES

Q: Any comment on reports that the U.S. has taken into custody six individuals with suspected links to Al-Qaida?

A: -- U.S. MILITARY FORCES IN BOSNIA ON JANUARY 18 TOOK CUSTODY OF SIX PERSONS SUSPECTED OF TERRORIST LINKS.

-- I REFER YOU TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR DETAILS.

-- THE U.S. APPRECIATES THE CLOSE COOPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND ITS LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES IN THIS MATTER.

Q: Where are they now?

A. -- U.S. FORCES TRANSPORTED THE SIX SUSPECTED TERRORISTS FROM BOSNIA ON JANUARY 19. THEY HAVE NOW ARRIVED IN GUANTANAMO BAY. I WOULD REFER YOU TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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Q: What are their links to Al-Qaida?

A: - BECAUSE OUR INVESTIGATION INTO THEIR ACTIVITIES IS CONTINUING, I CANNOT COMMENT ON WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THEIR LINKS TO THE AL-QAIDA TERRORIST NETWORK.

-- THESE SIX PERSONS, HOWEVER, POSED A CREDIBLE SECURITY THREAT TO U.S. PERSONNEL AND FACILITIES AS WELL AS TO THE PEOPLE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA.

Q: Why weren't they handed over to SFOR?

A: -- THE TRANSFER OF THESE INDIVIDUALS WAS IN RESPONSE TO A BILATERAL REQUEST FROM THE UNITED STATES.

Q: What nationality are they?

A: -- ALL SIX ARE ALGERIAN NATIONALS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT, WHILE FIVE OF THEM HAD ALSO HELD BOSNIAN CITIZENSHIP, BOSNIAN AUTHORITIES TOOK STEPS TO REVOKE THAT CITIZENSHIP AND THE ISSUE WAS LITIGATED.

Q: What does the Algerian government have to say about this?

A: -- WE INFORMED THE GOVERNMENT OF THIS ACTION. I DIRECT YOU TO THAT GOVERNMENT FOR COMMENT.

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BACKGROUND: In October, Bosnian authorities at U.S. urging
detained six persons believed to be preparing an attack on
the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo.

[REDACTED]

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The suspects were
scheduled to be released on January 18.

[REDACTED] and the threat that the individuals therefore
pose to U.S. forces and civilians in Bosnia, release was
determined to be unacceptable. The U.S. therefore decided
to take them into custody and transfer them out of Bosnia.
The suspects left Bosnia on January 19 and arrived in
Guantanamo Bay on January 20.