

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED
Current Handling: n/a
Document Number: 2002STATE054631

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SOURCE: CBLEXCLS.008783

DRAFTED BY: EUR/PPD:KVDANIELS -- 03/21/2002 202-647-6988

APPROVED BY: EUR/PPD:DLARNETT

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO EUROPE ONLY COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ALMATY IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BAKU IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRATISLAVA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CHISINAU IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KIEV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MINSK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TASHKENT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TIRANA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY YEREVAN IMMEDIATE

USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA IMMEDIATE

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TAGS: OPRC

SUBJECT: EUR DAILY PRESS GUIDANCE - MARCH 21, 2002 PARIS

PASS TO USOECD

1. THE FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED AND
APPROVED BY THE BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN AFFAIRS AND
OTHER SELECTED BUREAUS HANDLING ISSUES OF INTEREST TO EUR
POSTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING. QUESTIONS SHOULD BE
REFERRED TO EUR PRESS OFFICE (202) 647-6925.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
DATE/CASE ID: 04 NOV 2004 200303827

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TOPICS INCLUDE:

- PRESS NOTICE: SECRETARY,S TRAVEL TO EUROPE
- PRESS NOTICE: DEPUTY SECRETARY,S TRAVEL TO EUROPE
- MILITARY COMMISSIONS: DOD RULES AND REGULATIONS
- DEVELOPMENT: PRESIDENT,S INITIATIVE
- BOSNIA: TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN SARAJEVO
- FRY: STATUS OF U.S. DIPLOMAT; RESIGNATION OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
- FRANCE: MOUSSAOUI INVESTIGATION
- BELARUS: ARMS TRANSFERS
- NAGORNO-KARABAKH: RESTRUCTURED NEGOTIATIONS
- ICTY: U.S. WITNESSES IN MILOSEVIC TRIAL
- SLOVAKIA: FORMER PRIME MINISTER,S MEETING WITH STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL
- SPAIN: BASQUE REGION ASSASINATION
- POLAND: PROFESSIONALISM OF POLISH MILITARY

2. SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN L. POWELL TO TRAVEL TO EUROPE
SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN L. POWELL WILL TRAVEL TO EUROPE FROM
APRIL 8 TO 11, 2002. THE TRIP WILL TAKE THE SECRETARY TO
BERLIN, GERMANY AND MADRID, SPAIN.

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IN BERLIN, THE SECRETARY WILL CONDUCT A SERIES OF MEETINGS
WITH GERMAN LEADERS ABOUT EUROPEAN ISSUES, THE WAR ON
TERRORISM AND OTHER MATTERS.

IN MADRID, THE SECRETARY WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN THE
SEMI-ANNUAL U.S. - EUROPEAN UNION MINISTERIAL MEETING. HE
WILL BE CONSULTING WITH HIS E.U. COUNTERPARTS ABOUT THE WAR
ON TERRORISM, ISSUES ON THE U.S. - E.U. AGENDA AND ON OUR
INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMATIC COOPERATION. THE SECRETARY WILL
ALSO CONDUCT BILATERAL MEETINGS WITH SPANISH LEADERS. IN
PREPARATION FOR THE PRESIDENT'S SUMMIT VISIT TO RUSSIA IN
MAY, THE SECRETARY PLANS TO MEET IN MADRID WITH RUSSIAN
FEDERATION FOREIGN MINISTER IGOR IVANOV.

3. TRAVEL OF DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE RICHARD L. ARMITAGE TO
ROMANIA AND BELGIUM

ON MARCH 24, DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE RICHARD L. ARMITAGE
WILL TRAVEL TO BUCHAREST, ROMANIA TO ATTEND A SUMMIT OF THE
TEN COUNTRIES THAT COMPRISE THE VILNIUS GROUP. THE DEPUTY
SECRETARY,S PARTICIPATION WILL REAFFIRM U.S. SUPPORT FOR
LAUNCHING A NEW AND ROBUST ROUND OF NATO ENLARGEMENT AT THE
PRAGUE SUMMIT IN NOVEMBER 2002 AND UNDERScore U.S. COMMITMENT
TO PRESIDENT BUSH,S VISION OF A EUROPE &WHOLE, FREE, AND AT

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&BUCHAREST SUMMIT 2002: THE SPRING OF NEW ALLIES8 WILL TAKE
PLACE MARCH 25 - 26. PARTICIPANTS WILL INCLUDE HEADS OF
GOVERNMENT AND SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM THE COUNTRIES OF THE
VILNIUS GROUP - - ALBANIA, BULGARIA, CROATIA, ESTONIA,
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LATVIA, LITHUANIA, MACEDONIA, ROMANIA, SLOVAKIA, AND SLOVENIA
- - AS WELL AS FROM MANY NATO ALLIES.

THE SUMMIT WILL PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE DEPUTY
SECRETARY TO URGE THE ASPIRANT COUNTRIES TO CONTINUE THEIR
EFFORTS AT DEMOCRATIC, ECONOMIC, AND MILITARY REFORMS IN
ORDER TO MAKE THEMSELVES THE BEST POSSIBLE CANDIDATES FOR THE
NEXT ROUND OF ENLARGEMENT.

ON MARCH 26, THE DEPUTY SECRETARY WILL TRAVEL TO NATO
HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, WHERE HE WILL REVIEW THE
SUMMIT AND PROGRESS OF THE ASPIRANT COUNTRIES WITH THE
MEMBERS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL (NAC).

4. MILITARY COMMISSIONS: DOD RULES AND REGULATIONS

Q: HOW DO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S RULES AND
REGULATIONS DIFFER FROM THE PRESIDENT'S MILITARY ORDER OF
NOVEMBER 13, 2001?

A: -- THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RULES AND REGULATIONS ARE
CONSISTENT WITH THE PRESIDENT'S ORDER. AS EXPECTED, THEY
PROVIDE FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING MILITARY COMMISSION
PROCEDURES, INCLUDING DESCRIPTIONS OF ADDITIONAL PROTECTIONS.

Q: WHAT ADDITIONAL PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS DO THE
REGULATIONS PROVIDE?

-- IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE REGULATIONS PROVIDE THE
FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW.
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THIS INCLUDES THE 1949 GENEVA CONVENTIONS, THE CUSTOMARY
PROVISIONS OF THE 1977 ADDITIONAL PROTOCOLS TO THE GENEVA
CONVENTIONS (TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS NOT/NOT A PARTY),
AND THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS
(TO WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS A PARTY).

-- THE REGULATIONS STATE THAT DEFENDANTS WILL BE PROVIDED

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WITH MILITARY DEFENSE COUNSEL. THEY ALSO WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN COUNSEL, WHO MAY BE EITHER A MILITARY OFFICER WHO IS A JUDGE ADVOCATE OR CIVILIAN COUNSEL FROM A PRE-QUALIFIED POOL.

-- DEFENDANTS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH A COPY OF THE CHARGES IN THEIR NATIVE LANGUAGE FAR ENOUGH IN ADVANCE OF TRIAL TO PREPARE THEIR DEFENSE.

-- DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL PROVEN GUILTY, AND MAY BE FOUND GUILTY ONLY IF THERE IS PROOF BEYOND A REASONABLE DOUBT.

-- DEFENDANTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE TO TESTIFY AGAINST THEMSELVES, AND WILL BE ABLE TO OBTAIN WITNESSES AND DOCUMENTS TO USE IN THEIR DEFENSE.

-- DEFENDANTS MAY ENTER INTO PLEA AGREEMENTS AND SHALL NOT BE TRIED TWICE FOR THE SAME CRIME.

-- GUILTY VERDICTS MAY BE APPEALED TO A THREE-MEMBER REVIEW PANEL. THE REVIEW PANEL WILL CONSIST OF THREE MILITARY OFFICERS OR CIVILIANS TEMPORARILY COMMISSIONED AS MILITARY OFFICERS, AT LEAST ONE OF WHOM HAS EXPERIENCE AS A JUDGE.

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Q: DOES THE PRESIDENT PLAN TO USE THE MILITARY COMMISSIONS, AND IF SO, WHO WILL BE TRIED AND WHEN WILL THE FIRST TRIALS OCCUR?

A: -- MILITARY COMMISSIONS ARE ONE OF MANY OPTIONS THAT MAY BE USED IN THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE DURING THE WAR ON TERRORISM. WHETHER THEY ARE USED WILL DEPEND UPON HOW THE INVESTIGATIONS PROCEED, WHAT EVIDENCE IS GATHERED, AND WHETHER THE PRESIDENT DECIDES TO DESIGNATE ANY INDIVIDUALS FOR TRIAL. AT THIS TIME, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY WHETHER ANY INDIVIDUALS WILL BE TRIED BY MILITARY COMMISSIONS AND IF SO, WHO THOSE INDIVIDUALS MIGHT BE.

Q: IS IT TRUE THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS DECIDED NOT TO USE MILITARY COMMISSIONS AT ALL?

A: -- NO SUCH DECISION HAS BEEN MADE. THE PRESIDENT'S MILITARY ORDER AND THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S REGULATIONS SUGGEST THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO VIEW MILITARY COMMISSIONS AS ONE OF MANY LEGITIMATE OPTIONS IN THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE.

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Q: WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HOLDING MILITARY COMMISSIONS IN SECRET?

A: -- MILITARY COMMISSIONS WILL NOT BE SECRET. THE REGULATIONS INDICATE THAT MILITARY COMMISSIONS WILL BE PUBLIC AND OPEN AT ALL TIMES UNLESS THERE ARE SERIOUS SECURITY OR SAFETY REASONS FOR CLOSING PARTICULAR SESSIONS. SUCH REASONS MAY INCLUDE THE NEED TO PROTECT WITNESSES, JUDGES, AND OTHERS
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WHO MIGHT BE IN DANGER, AS WELL AS THE NEED TO PROTECT CLASSIFIED INFORMATION. IN ANY EVENT, PROCEEDINGS WILL NOT BE CLOSED TO DEFENSE COUNSEL. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW AND COMPARABLE TO THE PROCEDURES USED IN THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNALS FOR THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA AND RWANDA.

Q: IS IT TRUE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CHANGED ITS POSITION ON MILITARY COMMISSION PROCEDURES IN RESPONSE TO THE PUBLIC OUTCRY AGAINST THE NOVEMBER 13 MILITARY ORDER?

A: -- THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SOUGHT THE VIEWS OF OTHER DEPARTMENTS, DISTINGUISHED EXPERTS, AND OTHERS, INCLUDING PROMINENT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS. OUR ALLIES AND MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA ALSO PROVIDED CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS AND OPINIONS. IT IS SAFE TO ASSUME THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE TOOK MANY OF THESE VIEWS INTO ACCOUNT AS IT MADE DECISIONS REGARDING THE REGULATIONS.

5. DEVELOPMENT: THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE

Q: WHAT'S THE CORRECT FIGURE FOR THE INCREASE IN AID LEVELS THE PRESIDENT HAS CALLED FOR? IS IT 5 BILLION DOLLARS OVER 3 YEARS, OR IS IT A GRADUAL INCREASE OVER THREE YEARS TO A TOTAL INCREASE OF 5 BILLION DOLLARS IN THE THIRD YEAR? WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE THIRD YEAR?

A: -- THE WHITE HOUSE HAS CLARIFIED THAT UNDER THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT WOULD BE 5 BILLION DOLLARS IN FY06. IN FY04 THERE WOULD BE AN INCREASE OF 1.66 BILLION DOLLARS TO FUND
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THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT AND IN FY05 WE WOULD CONTRIBUTE 3.33 BILLION DOLLARS FOR THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT AS OUR FUNDING RAMPS UP TO THE FY06 LEVEL. THUS, THE PROPOSED CUMULATIVE INCREASE OVER THREE YEARS WILL THEN BE

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APPROXIMATELY 10 BILLION DOLLARS. AFTER FY06 WE WOULD EXPECT TO CONTINUE FUNDING THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT AT 5 BILLION DOLLARS PER YEAR. OF COURSE, ALL OF THESE FIGURES ARE SUBJECT TO CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL THROUGH THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS.

Q: SINCE TOTAL U.S. OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IS NOW ABOUT 10 BILLION DOLLARS, IN FY06 IT WILL BE 15 BILLION DOLLARS?

A: -- A BETTER DESCRIPTION WOULD BE THAT OUR OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE LEVEL IN FY06 WILL BE 5 BILLION DOLLARS GREATER THAN THE LEVEL PREVIOUSLY FORESEEN. THIS REFLECTS THAT FACT THAT THE PRESIDENT'S FY03 BUDGET FORESEES GROWTH IN OUR ASSISTANCE LEVELS FOR FY03 AND SUBSEQUENT YEARS.

Q: HOW DOES U.S. AID COMPARE TO EU AID? WILL U.S. AID REACH .39 PER CENT OF GNP AS THE EU PLANS TO ACHIEVE?

A:-- WE ARE INCREASING OUR ASSISTANCE LEVELS. I UNDERSTAND THE EU WILL BE INCREASING ITS ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, LEVELS ARE LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE RESULTS THE ASSISTANCE BRINGS. THIS IS THE VERY POSITIVE MESSAGE COMING OUT OF MONTERREY. THAT'S WHY THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED SECRETARY POWELL AND SECRETARY O'NEILL TO REACH OUT TO THE WORLD TO DEVELOP A SET OF CLEAR AND CONCRETE OBJECTIVES IN THE AREAS OF GOOD
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GOVERNANCE, HEALTH AND EDUCATION, AND SOUND ECONOMIC POLICIES THAT FOSTER ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP.

6. BOSNIA: TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF EMBASSY

Q: CAN YOU PROVIDE SOME DETAILS ON THE TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY IN SARAJEVO?

A: -- THE U.S. EMBASSY IN SARAJEVO WILL BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC MARCH 21 AND 22 TO REVIEW ITS SECURITY POSTURE. THE EMBASSY WILL REMAIN CLOSED THROUGH THE WEEKEND.

-- THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY WAS INFORMED THROUGH THE WARDEN SYSTEM.

-- AMERICAN CITIZENS REQUIRING EMERGENCY SERVICES SHOULD CONTACT THE EMBASSY.

-- THE EMBASSY WILL REVIEW ITS SECURITY POSTURE OVER THE WEEKEND AND DECIDE WHETHER TO REOPEN ON MONDAY MORNING.

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Q: CAN YOU GIVE US ANY INFORMATION ABOUT THE NATURE OF THESE SECURITY CONCERNS?

A:-- I CANNOT PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT WHY THE EMBASSY IS REVIEWING ITS, SECURITY POSTURE.

Q: ARE YOU GOING TO ISSUE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OR TRAVEL WARNING FOR THESE COUNTRIES BECAUSE OF THIS SITUATION?

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A:-- THE WORLDWIDE CAUTION OF MARCH 17, 2002, WHICH REMAINS IN EFFECT, NOTES THAT POSTS WORLDWIDE MAY TEMPORARILY SUSPEND OPERATIONS OR CLOSE TO THE PUBLIC TO REVIEW THEIR SECURITY POSTURE AND ENSURE ITS ADEQUACY.

AS ALWAYS, IF WE RECEIVE INFORMATION THAT CAUSES US TO BECOME CONCERNED ABOUT THE SAFETY OR SECURITY OF PRIVATE AMERICAN CITIZENS IN BOSNIA, WE WILL ALERT THE PUBLIC THROUGH OUR CONSULAR INFORMATION PROGRAM DOCUMENTS.

7. FRY: STATUS OF U.S. DIPLOMAT; RESIGNATION OF DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Q: WHAT MORE CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE INCIDENT INVOLVING A U.S. EMBASSY OFFICIAL WHO WAS DETAINED LAST WEEK IN BELGRADE?

A: -- WE VIEW THE FORMAL APOLOGY WE RECEIVED FROM FOREIGN MINISTER GORAN SVILANOVIC AS A PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE MILITARY'S INAPPROPRIATE AND EXCESSIVE ACTIONS. WE NOW CONSIDER THIS MATTER CLOSED AS A BILATERAL ISSUE.

Q: ANY COMMENT ON NEWS REPORTS THAT YUGOSLAV MILITARY SOURCES SAID THE U.S. AMBASSADOR WAS SHOWN A VIDEOTAPE OF PERISIC ACTUALLY HANDING COMPUTER DISKS TO THE U.S. DIPLOMAT?

A: -- WE ARE NOT GOING TO COMMENT ON SPECULATION BY UNNAMED SOURCES. WE HAVE RECEIVED A FORMAL APOLOGY AND CONSIDER THE MATTER CLOSED.

Q: ANY COMMENT ON DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER PERISIC'S
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RESIGNATION?

A: -- WE VIEW THIS AS AN INTERNAL POLITICAL MATTER.

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Q: IS THE U.S. DIPLOMAT STILL IN BELGRADE? WILL HE REMAIN THERE?

A: -- HE IS STILL IN BELGRADE.
8. FRANCE: MOUSSAOUI INVESTIGATION

Q: ARE THE FRENCH BLOCKING THE MOUSSAOUI INVESTIGATION?

A: -- THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN A CLOSE AND EFFECTIVE PARTNER IN THE WAR AGAINST TERRORISM, INCLUDING THE INVESTIGATION OF ALLEGED TERRORISTS. WE FULLY ANTICIPATE THAT SUCH COOPERATION WILL CONTINUE.

-- WE RECOGNIZE THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT'S LONG-STANDING OPPOSITION TO CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, WHICH IS NOT USED IN ANY EUROPEAN COUNTRY.

-- ATTORNEY GENERAL ASHCROFT IS EXPECTED TO DECIDE THIS MONTH WHETHER TO SEEK THE DEATH PENALTY IN THE MOUSSAOUI CASE.

-- AS FOR QUESTIONS ON THE SPECIFIC APPLICATION OF THE MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE TREATY IN THE MOUSSAOUI CASE, AND ON ASPECTS OF THE ONGOING INVESTIGATION IN THIS CASE, I REFER YOU TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE INVESTIGATION IN THIS CASE.

Q: WILL PRESIDENTS BUSH AND CHIRAC DISCUSS THIS MATTER ON FRIDAY?

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A: -- AT THEIR BILATERAL MEETING AT THE MONTERREY (MEXICO) CONFERENCE ON DEVELOPMENT, WE ANTICIPATE THE TWO PRESIDENTS WILL DISCUSS MATTERS RELATED TO FINANCING INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WHICH IS THE THEME OF THE CONFERENCE. I WOULD REFER YOU TO THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE FRENCH PRESIDENCY FOR FURTHER DETAILS ON THEIR PLANNED DISCUSSION.

9. BELARUS: ARMS TRANSFERS

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. POSITION ON ALLEGED ARMS TRANSFERS BY BELARUS? DID DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY PIFER RAISE THIS DURING HIS FEBRUARY VISIT TO MINSK?

A: -- WE TAKE SERIOUSLY ANY REPORTS OF ARMS TRANSFERS TO GROUPS OR COUNTRIES SPONSORING OR FOSTERING TERRORISM.

-- WHILE IN MINSK, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY PIFER REITERATED THE U.S. POSITION THAT BELARUS SHOULD NOT BE IN

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THE BUSINESS OF SELLING ARMS TO COUNTRIES WITH HISTORIES OF SUPPORTING TERRORISM OR FOMENTING REGIONAL CONFLICT.

-- HE ALSO STRESSED THAT, IF BELARUS GENUINELY WANTS TO IMPROVE ITS IMAGE AND END ITS SELF-IMPOSED ISOLATION, IT NEEDS TO MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICES ON THESE ISSUES, AS WELL AS ON DEMOCRACY, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND OTHER MATTERS.

Q: IS IT COMMON FOR U.S. OFFICIALS TO RAISE SUCH ISSUES WITH GOVERNMENTS?

A: -- WE RAISE THE ISSUE OF ARMS SALES TO IRAQ WITH ANY
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NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS, WHENEVER WE HAVE INFORMATION THAT WE CAN USE. THERE ARE TWO CENTRAL ISSUES: COMPLIANCE WITH UN SANCTIONS AND THE DANGER OF SUCH SALES TO A HOSTILE REGIME.

10. NAGORNO-KARABAKH: RESTRUCTURED NEGOTIATIONS

Q. HAVE THERE BEEN ANY NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS OVER NAGORNO-KARABAKH?

A: -- THE OSCE ANNOUNCED IN VIENNA ON MARCH 15 THAT A NEW SERIES OF NEGOTIATIONS WILL BEGIN SOON AS PART OF THE ONGOING EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT BETWEEN AZERBAIJAN AND ARMENIA OVER NAGORNO-KARABAKH. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS?

-- PRESIDENT KOCHARIAN OF ARMENIA AND PRESIDENT ALIYEV OF AZERBAIJAN HAVE ASSURED US THAT THEY REMAIN FULLY COMMITTED TO THEIR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS. HOWEVER, THEY FOUND THAT THEY COULD NOT MEET AS FREQUENTLY AS NECESSARY TO EXPEDITE THESE IMPORTANT NEGOTIATIONS.

-- THEY HAVE AGREED TO ADD AN ADDITIONAL LEVEL OF SENIOR-LEVEL DISCUSSIONS LED BY PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES TO ENHANCE THEIR ABILITY TO PREPARE FOR THEIR OWN MEETINGS, MOVING THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS FORWARD.

-- THE PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES ALSO WILL ASSIST THE WORK OF THE MINSK GROUP (A GROUP OF 12 OSCE MEMBER STATES, CO-CHAIRLED BY THE UNITED STATES, THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, AND THE FRENCH REPUBLIC) THAT IS COMMITTED TO FACILITATING A POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH DISPUTE.

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Q WHAT IS THE CURRENT U.S. POSITION ON RESOLVING THIS LONG-STANDING DISPUTE?

A: -- THE U.S. POSITION SUPPORTS BOTH THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AZERBAIJAN (I.E., THAT NAGORNO-KARABAKH REMAINS A PART OF AZERBAIJAN), AND A POLITICAL RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT.

11. ICTY: U.S. EVIDENCE IN MILOSEVIC TRIAL

Q: CAN YOU COMMENT ON REPORTS THAT THE U.S. HAS AGREED TO ALLOW CURRENT AND FORMER U.S. OFFICIALS TO PROVIDE LIMITED TESTIMONY IN THE MILOSEVIC TRIAL?

A: -- WE ARE ENTERTAINING REQUESTS FOR U.S. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO TESTIFY BUT WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO COMMENT ON THE IDENTITY OR CIRCUMSTANCES OF THEIR TESTIMONY.

(IF PRESSED:)

Q: DID CARLA DEL PONTE DISCUSS THIS WITH THE SECRETARY DURING HER MEETING WITH HIM?

A: -- CARLA DEL PONTE RAISED THE ISSUE OF WITNESSES FOR THE MILOSEVIC TRIAL WITH SECRETARY POWELL IN THEIR MEETING ON MARCH 18.

(IF PRESSED)

Q: IS THERE A PRECEDENT FOR THIS? ARE U.S. OFFICIALS ALLOWED TO TESTIFY IN FOREIGN CRIMINAL CASES?

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-- FORMER AND CURRENT U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE IN THE PAST PROVIDED TESTIMONY WHEN APPROPRIATE IN FOREIGN CRIMINAL CASES.

(IF PRESSED)

Q: IS THE U.S. OFFERING ANY EVIDENCE IN THE MILOSEVIC TRIAL?

A: -- OVER THE PAST SEVEN YEARS, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS PROVIDED THE OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA (ICTY) WITH MAPS, IMAGERY, DOCUMENTS, BRIEFINGS, AND ACCESS TO U.S. OFFICIALS FOR BACKGROUND AND AS LEADS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EVIDENCE FOR THE CASE AGAINST MILOSEVIC AS WELL AS OTHERS.

-- WE SENT THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION IN ONE OF THE FIRST CONVOYS AS AMERICAN FORCES MOVED INTO KOSOVO FOR

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THE PURPOSE OF DOCUMENTING THE FORENSICS EVIDENCE NECESSARY TO PROVE KEY PARTS OF THE CASE AGAINST MILOSEVIC IN COURT. THIS EVIDENCE WAS THEN PROVIDED TO THE PROSECUTION TEAM.

-- THE UNITED STATES ALSO FUNDED INTERVIEWS OF KOSOVAR REFUGEES AND PROVIDED THEIR STATEMENTS TO THE TRIBUNAL.

-- IN SOME CASES, U.S. GOVERNMENT INFORMATION, INCLUDING IMAGERY OF MASS GRAVES AND MAPS, HAS BEEN USED IN ICTY TRIALS WITH OUR APPROVAL. WE EXPECT THAT TO BE THE CASE IN THE MILOSEVIC TRIAL AS WELL.

12. SLOVAKIA: FORMER PRIME MINISTER,S MEETING WITH STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL

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Q: WHAT WAS THE PURPOSE OF TODAY,S VISIT OF A FORMER SLOVAKIAN PRIME MINISTER TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT?

A: - - VLADIMIR MECIAR, FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF SLOVAKIA AND CURRENT OPPOSITION LEADER, MET THIS MORNING WITH THE STATE DEPARMENT'S OFFICE OF NORTH CENTRAL EUROPEAN AFFAIRS. THE MEETING WAS ARRANGED AS A COURTESY AT MR. MECIAR'S REQUEST.

-- THE DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON SLOVAKIA'S UPCOMING ELECTIONS AND ITS NATO MEMBERSHIP ASPIRATIONS.

-- MR. MECIAR WAS REMINDED THAT NATO IS NOT ONLY A MILITARY ALLIANCE, BUT IS ALSO A COMMUNITY OF SHARED VALUES. THE U.S. HAS SERIOUS CONCERNS ABOUT HIS AND HIS PARTY'S COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES AND POSSIBLE RETURN TO GOVERNMENT, BASED ON THE PRACTICES OF ITS PREVIOUS TERM IN GOVERNMENT.

13. SPAIN: BASQUE REGION ASSASSINATION

Q: ANY COMMENT ON TODAY,S MURDER OF A LOCAL OFFICIAL TODAY IN NORTHERN SPAIN?

A:-- REPORTS HAVE QUOTED SPANISH OFFICIALS AS SAYING THIS MURDER BEARS THE HALLMARKS OF THE TERRORIST ORGANIZATION &ETA.8

-- WE CONDEMN THIS SENSELESS AND VIOLENT ACT AND SUPPORT THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT'S VIGOROUS EFFORTS TO COMBAT &ETA8 TERRORISM AND BRING THE PERPETRATORS OF THESE ATTACKS TO JUSTICE.

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Q: IS "ETA" AMONG THOSE DESIGNATED AS A FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A: -- "ETA" IS A DESIGNATED FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION AND WAS INCLUDED IN THE NOVEMBER 2 ASSET FREEZE EXECUTIVE ORDER. THE NAMES OF 21 INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE ACTED ON BEHALF OF &ETA8 WERE ADDED TO THAT LIST LAST MONTH. SINCE JANUARY 2000, "ETA" HAS CONDUCTED OVER 50 BOMBINGS AND SHOOTINGS RESULTING IN OVER 30 DEATHS AND DOZENS OF INJURIES THROUGHOUT SPAIN. IN THE PAST 30 YEARS, "ETA" HAS KILLED OVER 850 PERSONS.

14. POLAND: PROFESSIONALISM OF POLISH MILITARY

Q: DOES THE CRITICISM OF THE POLISH MILITARY ATTRIBUTED TO U.S. OFFICIALS IN THE POLISH WEEKLY WPROST ACCURATELY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT?

A: -- AS AMBASSADOR HILL AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES HAVE STATED PRIVATELY AND PUBLICLY ON MANY OCCASIONS, POLAND IS A VALUED NATO ALLY.

- - WE HAVE THE HIGHEST RESPECT FOR THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE POLISH MILITARY, WE ENJOY EXCELLENT COOPERATION WITH THE POLISH MILITARY, AND WE ARE ESPECIALLY GRATEFUL FOR POLAND'S MILITARY CONTRIBUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE WAR ON TERRORISM IN GENERAL AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM IN PARTICULAR.

IF PRESSED:

- - WE DO NOT AGREE WITH THE TONE NOR WITH MANY OF THE ASSERTIONS IN THE WPROST ARTICLE.

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