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UK COMMS ONLY
FM JEDDA
TO FLASH FCO
TELNO 101
OF 140800Z AUGUST 90
INFO FLASH RIYADH, MODUK
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON (BDS)

SIC AAA/ZAC/I9M

MODUK PSE PASS TO JFHQ HIGH WYCOMBE
RIYADH FOR FORCE COMMANDER
WASHINGTON FOR BDS

FROM AMBASSADOR IN JEDDA

YOUR TELNO 427 TO RIYADH: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT.

1. I SUSPECT TUR WAS SENT BEFORE AVM WILSON SENT HIS SIGNAL 132000Z TO JHQ HIGH WYCOMBE LAST NIGHT. I DISCUSSED MISMATCH WITH AVM WILSON LAST NIGHT HE HAD EXPLORED WITH US COMMAND AND RSAF. HAVING AT LAST SEEN TEXT OF US/SAUDI ROE WILSON APPEARED REASSURED THAT THEY DID HAVE SUFFICIENT SAFEGUARDS TO ACHIEVE PROPER VERIFICATION OF HOSTILE AIR TARGETS AND SO AVOID MISTAKEN ENGAGEMENT. COMBAT AREA IS CLOSED TO CIVIL AIR TRAFFIC (AIR ROUTES REROUTED). WILSON ALSO ARRANGED FOR RAF OFFICER TO BE PRESENT IN SAUDI GROUND ADOC DURING RAF PATROLS(CAPS), AND ASCERTAINED THAT BOTH US AND SAUDI AWACS FLIGHTS WILL HAVE US PERSONNEL ON BOARD. WILSON DESCRIBED US ROE AS VERY SPECIFIC, AND INVOLVING SOUND ARRANGEMENTS TO CROSS CHECK POTENTIAL TARGETS. HE ALSO REGARDED 10 MILE BUFFER ZONE AS SUFFICIENT TO CATER FOR IRAQI PROVOCATIVE PROBES. AN AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN OVER 10 MILES INSIDE SAUDI AIRSPACE WOULD FALL ON SAUDI TERRITORY (AN IMPORTANT POINT).
2. WILSON HAS ACCORDINGLY RECOMMENDED WE ACCEPT US/SAUDI ROE. MOREOVER UNTIL WE DO, AMERICANS/SAUDIS REFUSE TO USE F3 ON CAPS. BOTH FORCE COMMANDER AND AM STUART PAUL SAY IT IS OPERATIONALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR AN E 3 AWACS CREW TO CONTROL ENGAGEMENTS USING TWO SETS OF ROE SIMULANEOUSLY.
3. WE NOW HAVE SITUATION IN EFFECT GROUNDED UNTIL COMMON ROE ARE WORKED OUT. NOT ONLY DOES THIS VITIATE OUR AIR DEFENCE CONTRIBUTION AT A TIME WHEN IT IS MUCH NEEDED ON CAP, BUT IT ALREADY CALLS IN QUESTION WITH SAUDI MILITARY REALITY OF OUR

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COMMITMENT TO COME TO THEIR AID. OUR CAUTION WILL VERY QUICKLY UNDERMINE POLITICAL IMPACT OF OUR SWIFT CONTRIBUTION, AND RISKS OUR WHOLE RELATIONSHIP WITH RSAF. THEIR CONCERN AND RESENTMENT WILL RISE QUICKLY TO SULTAN AND THE KING (IT MAY ALREADY HAVE DONE SO, AS GENERAL TURKI WARNED WILSON LAST EVENING,) NEGATIVE EFFECTS I NEED NOT SPELL OUT.

4. IN LIGHT OF AVM WILSON'S VIEW THAT US/SAUDI ROE HAVE SOLID SAFEGUARDS, AND GIVEN POTENTIALLY DISASTROUS IMPLICATIONS ONCE SAUDIS PERCIEVE US AS NOT FULLY ALONGSIDE AMERICANS AND THEMSELVES AT THIS TIME OF DANGER, I URGE MOST STRONGLY IMMEDIATE ACCEPTANCE OF ROE ARRANGEMENTS AS THEY STAND. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO SIT ON THE GROUND.

5. AVM WILSON AGREES TO LOGDING WITH UN, AND ASKS THIS TO BE PURSUED BY WASHINGTON.

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FM WASHINGTON
TO DESKBY 132330Z FCO
TELNO 1915
OF 132225Z AUGUST 90
AND TO DESKBY 132330Z MODUK
AND TO IMMEDIATE RIYADH, ACTOR

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MODUK FOR DUS(P)

IRAQ/KUWAIT: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, PRINCE BANDAR, ASKED ME TODAY (13 AUGUST) TO PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO THE PRIME MINISTER.

2. BANDAR SAID THAT A PROBLEM HAD ARISEN REGARDING THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT (ROES) FOR THE BRITISH TORNADOES IN SAUDI ARABIA. THE AMERICAN AND SAUDI AIR FORCES WERE OPERATING UNDER COMMON ROES WHICH ALLOWED ENGAGEMENT WHEN RADAR CONTACT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH A HOSTILE AIRCRAFT. BRITISH RULES ALLOWED ENGAGEMENT ONLY WHEN VISUAL CONTACT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED. THE SAUDIS CONSIDERED THAT THIS LACK OF STANDARDISATION IN THE ROES COULD GIVE RISE TO OPERATIONAL DIFFICULTIES AND POSE A THREAT TO THE SAFETY OF THE BRITISH AIRCRAFT. THEY HAD BEEN TOLD BY THE SENIOR BRITISH AIR FORCE OFFICER IN SAUDI ARABIA THAT THE RULES COULD BE CHANGED, IF AT ALL, ONLY BY REFERENCE TO THE BRITISH CABINET. PRINCE BANDAR THEREFORE REQUESTED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD BE INFORMED OF THE SAUDI RECOMMENDATION THAT THE BRITISH ROES SHOULD BE CHANGED TO STANDARDISE THEM WITH THE AMERICAN AND SAUDI RULES.

COMMENT

3. WE HAVE ALSO SEEN PARA 7 OF RIYADH TELNO 634 WHICH PUTS A RATHER DIFFERENT SLANT ON SAUDI ATTITUDES TO ROES. BUT BANDAR IS USUALLY WELL INFORMED AND UNLIKELY TO BE BEHIND THE GAME. IT MAY BE THAT AMERICAN PRESSURE HAS OVERCOME SAUDI RELUCTANCE. BUT IF PRINCE BANDAR IS RIGHT, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR US TO ARGUE HERE THAT UK VIEWS SHOULD TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER THE LEADING PROVIDER OF AIR DEFENCE AND THE REQUEST (HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY ARRIVED AT) OF THE HOST NATION.

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