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SIC I9M
MY TELNO 420: NATO CONSULATIONS ON IRAQ/KUWAIT

SUMMARY

1. LITTLE CHANGE IN IRAQI MILITARY DISPOSITIONS ON THE GROUND: LULL IN ACTIVITY BY AIRFORCE. FURTHER EXCHANGE ON KUWAIT EMBASSIES AND FOREIGN NATIONALS. REPORTS ON PEREZ DE CUELLAR'S MISSION AND ARAB LEAGUE MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS. REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION OF BRITISH STATEMENTS.

DETAIL

2. IN TODAY'S POLITICAL COMMITTEE MEETING, THE IMS REPRESENTATIVE REPORTED LITTLE CHANGE ON THE GROUND IN SOUTHERN IRAQ AND KUWAIT. HOWEVER, THERE HAD BEEN A MARKED DECLINE IN TACTICAL AIRFORCE ACTIVITY: THIS WAS PROBABLY DUE TO A BACKLOG IN MAINTENANCE. ALTHOUGH SUCH A LULL IN ACTIVITY COULD PRECEDE AN OFFENSIVE, OTHER INDICATORS STILL SHOWED THAT THIS WAS UNLIKELY. EARLIER REPORTS OF SEA MINES PRESENT AT A KUWAIT NAVAL BASE WERE NOW ASSESSED AS INACCURATE.

3. ON SOVIET/IRAQI MILITARY RELATIONS, THE IMS REPRESENTATIVE SAID THE RUSSIANS WERE UNLIKELY TO BREAK UN SANCTIONS. AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF SOVIET DEPENDANTS, THE NUMBER OF MILITARY SPECIALISTS WOULD DECLINE AS CONTRACTS EXPIRED. BUT THERE WOULD BE A TOTAL AND IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL ONLY IF IT APPEARED THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE SPECIALISTS WAS STRAINING RELATIONS WITH THE WEST TO THE EXTENT OF ENDANGERING SOVIET/WESTERN ECONOMIC LINKS, OR IF THE SOVIET PERSONNEL WERE IN DIRECT DANGER.

4. U S SAID THAT SOVIET/IRAQI MILITARY RELATIONS DATED BACK TO THE 1960S. IN THE 1980S IRAQ WAS AMONG THE TOP FIVE RECIPIENTS OF SOVIET MILITARY EQUIPMENT. BETWEEN 1985 AND 1989, THE VALUE OF THIS TOTALLED DLRS 13 BILLION, INCLUDING SU 24 AND MIG 29 AIRCRAFT, T72 TANKS AND SCUD MISSILES. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF CW DELIVERIES.

ASSISTANCE WAS GIVEN IN TRAINING, NOT IN OPERATIONAL MATTERS. THE RUSSIANS WERE STILL WILLING TO TAKE OIL IN REPAYMENT FOR OUTSTANDING MILITARY DEBTS (U S COMMENTED THAT THE EMBARGO MEANT THAT NO OIL WOULD GET THROUGH).

5. U S REPORTED THAT ONE ADDITIONAL SQUADRON OF F111S FROM LAKENHEATH WAS BEING COMMITTED TO THE GULF AREA.

KUWAIT EMBASSIES/NATIONALS

6. UK REPORTED THAT THERE WAS NO PRESENT PROSPECT OF DIRECT FLIGHTS FROM IRAQ TO WESTERN EUROPE. EVACUATION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN COULD TAKE PLACE BY AIR OR ROAD VIA AMMAN. BRITISH WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE STILL RECEIVING EXIT PERMITS. WE WERE URGENTLY PURSUING THE POSSIBILITY OF AIR SHUTTLES TO AMMAN AND LAND CONVOYS. WE WERE ALSO WORKING ON PLANS TO EVACUATE BRITISH WOMEN AND CHILDREN FROM KUWAIT VIA BAGHDAD.

7. FRG SAID HIS KUWAIT EMBASSY REMAINED OPEN. THE GDR AMBASSADOR HAD ATTEMPTED TO TRANSFER TO THE FRG EMBASSY, BUT HAD BEEN CAPTURED EN ROUTE AND WAS PRESUMED TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO BAGHDAD. YESTERDAY'S LUFTHANSA FLIGHT HAD EVACUATED 69 GERMAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN, 60 AMERICANS, 40 SPANIARDS, AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF DUTCH AND NNA. 99 GERMAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE PROCEEDING BY BUS FROM KUWAIT TO BAGHDAD.

8. U S SAID THAT THE IRAQI AUTHORITIES HAD NOTIFIED JOURNALISTS WHO HAD ARRIVED IN BAGHDAD BEFORE 27 AUGUST THAT THEY SHOULD LEAVE - THOSE WHO HAD ARRIVED THEREAFTER HAD FIVE DAYS TO DEPART. MEN WHO HAD TAKEN THEIR FAMILIES TO OBTAIN EXIT PERMITS HAD THEMSELVES BEEN ARRESTED. THE U S AUTHORITIES SAW THIS AS AN ESCALATION. U S ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN AT THE SEIZURE OF THE GDR AMBASSADOR IN KUWAIT.

9. ITALY SAID THAT THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE OF THE TWELVE WOULD MEET IN ROME ON 7 SEPTEMBER, FOLLOWED PERHAPS BY A MEETING OF FOREIGN MINISTERS.

GENERAL SITUATION.

10. UK REPORTED ON KING HUSSEIN'S VISIT TO LONDON. BRITISH AND JORDANIAN ASSESSEMENTS OF WAYS TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS HAD BEEN FAR APART, BUT BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT IRAQ SHOULD WITHDRAW FROM KUWAIT: THAT THERE SHOULD BE RIGOROUS IMPLEMENTATION OF SANCTIONS: AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE A RENEWED DETERMINATION TO RESOLVE THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM.

11. U S REPORTED ON THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S MEETING WITH TARIQ AZIZ. THE LATTER SHOWED NO FLEXIBILITY ON RESOLUTION 660, AND RESORTED TO DIATRIBES AND OLD THINKING. THE POSSIBILITY OF SLIGHT PROGRESS ON HOSTAGES WAS NOTED - THE AGE OF MINORS WHO COULD LEAVE MIGHT BE RAISED FROM 18 TO 25. BUT THE IRAQIS INSISTED THAT A TOTAL RELEASE OF HOSTAGES MUST AWAIT A DECLINE IN U S PRESSURE. AZIZ HAD SAID THAT AN ARAB SOLUTION NEEDED TIME TO MATURE: THE U S INTERPRETED THIS AS FOOT DRAGGING.

12. NETHERLANDS REPORTED THAT AN IRAQI DELEGATION WAS EXPECTED IN TEHERAN. THE IRANIANS ANTICIPATED THAT THE IRAQIS WOULD MAKE FOUR POINTS:

- PARAS 6 AND 7 OF RESOLUTION 598 SHOULD BE DROPPED.
- RELATIONS SHOULD BE NORMALISED.
- THERE SHOULD BE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE MINISTRIES OF OIL, TRADE AND TRANSPORT.
- IRAN SHOULD SHOW FLEXIBILITY ON RESOLUTION 661.

NETHERLANDS ADDED THAT THE RADICAL COUNTER-CURRENTS AGAINST RAFSANJANI WERE GROWING.

12. FRG REPORTED ON THE MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE ARAB LEAGUE, CAIRO, 30 - 31 AUGUST. ALGERIA, IRAQ, JORDAN, MAURITANIA, SUDAN, TUNISIA, YEMEN AND PLO WERE ABSENT. THE MEETING PASSED FIVE RESOLUTIONS:

- THE ANNEXATION OF KUWAIT WAS CONDEMNED.
- IRAQ SHOULD WITHDRAW AND IMPLEMENT SECURITY COUNCIL AND ARAB LEAGUE RESOLUTIONS.
- IRAQ SHOULD RELEASE ALL FOREIGNERS.
- THE STATUS OF EMBASSIES IN KUWAIT WAS REAFFIRMED.
- IRAQ SHOULD PAY COMPENSATION FOR THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY THE INVASION.

LIBYA, ALTHOUGH PRESENT, CONDEMNED THE PRESENCE OF NON-ARAB FORCES IN THE GULF. FRG COMMENTED THAT THE SPLIT IN THE ARAB WORLD WAS NOW CLEAR. TURKEY ADDED THAT THE MEETING CONDEMNED THE INITIATIVES OF KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN, AND QUESTIONED HIS MOTIVES.

13. U S REPORTED ON THE VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION BY THE EGYPTIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AT THE END OF LAST WEEK. THE RUSSIANS FAVOURED A CONFERENCE TO HELP SOLVE BOTH THE GULF CRISIS AND THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM: THE EGYPTIANS WERE CAUTIOUS, ARGUING THAT IRAQ HAD DERAILED THE PEACE PROCESS.

BRITISH POLICY

14. CANADA REFERRED TO YOUR REMARKS IN THE GULF ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN AIR EMBARGO: WHAT EFFECT MIGHT THIS HAVE ON THE EVACUATION OF HOSTAGES? TURKEY REFERRED TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON TELEVISION ON 2 SEPTEMBER ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A NUREMBURG-TYPE TRIAL FOR SADDAM HUSSEIN AND OTHER IRAQIS: WHAT WAS BRITISH POLICY IN DETAIL ON THIS ISSUE? UK UNDERTOOK TO REVERT AT THE NEXT MEETING.

15. THE COMMITTEE WILL RECONVENE TOMORROW, 4 SEPTEMBER AT 0800Z.

16. GRATEFUL FOR DETAILED LINE TO TAKE ON THE POINTS IN PARA 14 ABOVE, BY 040700Z.

ALEXANDER

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