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JORDAN : SANCTIONS

SUMMARY

1. FRANK EXCHANGE WITH THE CROWN PRINCE ABOUT SANCTIONS BREACHES AND ABOUT JORDANIAN POLICY.

DETAIL

2. I CALLED ON THE CROWN PRINCE ON 9 OCTOBER. HE BEGAN WITH THE SUBJECT OF SANCTIONS WHICH THE US AMBASSADOR HAD RAISED WITH HIM IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO OUR MEETING. HARRISON HAD PASSED ON THE FINDINGS OF THE US EMBASSY (WHICH THEY HAVE ALSO PASSED TO US AND WHICH WE ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY) INDICATING AN INCREASE IN HEAVY GOODS VEHICLES FROM JORDAN TO IRAQ. HASSAN COMMENTED THAT HE WOULD BE FOLLOWING THIS UP URGENTLY. IF TRUE, IT WAS ENTIRELY CONTRARY TO HIS INSTRUCTIONS AND TO THE CLEAR DECISION TAKEN BY THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT TO APPLY SANCTIONS FULLY.

3. I SAID THAT TWO WEEKS AGO I HAD DELIVERED TO THE KING ON INSTRUCTIONS A LIST OF POSSIBLE SANCTIONS BREACHES. SO FAR, I HAD RECEIVED NO REPLY. AT THAT AUDIENCE, I HAD SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL TO HAVE A CENTRAL POINT OF REFERENCE TO WHICH I COULD BRING ANY FURTHER ENQUIRIES ABOUT POSSIBLE BREACHES OF SANCTIONS. THE CROWN PRINCE SAID THAT THE RIGHT RECIPIENT FOR SUCH MESSAGES WAS THE FINANCE MINISTER. I SAID THAT I HAD RAISED THE SAME POINT WITH JARDANEH ONLY YESTERDAY (MY TELNO 657) BUT HAD BEEN REFERRED TO THE PRIME MINISTER. THE LACK OF RESPONSE TO OUR APPROACHES ABOUT SANCTIONS BREACHES COULD HAVE A VERY NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE PROCESS OF AGREEING EC AID TO JORDAN. IF ALL OUR ENQUIRIES WERE SEEN TO FALL INTO A BOTTOMLESS PIT, MY GOVERNMENT WOULD DRAW THE CONCLUSION THAT THE JORDANIAN GOVERNMENT WAS NOT INTERESTED IN COOPERATING.

4. THE CROWN PRINCE REACTED POSITIVELY TO THIS APPROACH. HE SAID THAT HE ENTIRELY AGREED ON A NEED FOR A CENTRAL REFERENCE POINT FOR SANCTIONS ENQUIRIES. HE HIMSELF HAD SUGGESTED IT PRIOR TO HIS VISIT TO NEW YORK AND HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN PUT IN HAND. HE THEN TELEPHONED THE CHIEF OF THE ROYAL COURT AND ASKED THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD BE APPROACHED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY WITH A VIEW TO GETTING A REFERENCE POINT SET UP.

5. WE WENT ON TO DISCUSS JORDAN'S PRESENT POSITION IN THE GULF CRISIS. I SAID THAT I HAD BEEN MAKING CERTAIN ASSUMPTIONS SINCE THE ONSET OF THE CRISIS ABOUT JORDANIAN POLICY. THESE WERE THAT SANCTIONS WOULD BE APPLIED: THAT, DESPITE THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR SADDAM, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD SOMEHOW CONTROL PUBLIC OPINION: AND THAT EFFORTS WOULD BE MADE TO KEEP RELATIONS WITH OTHER ARAB STATES IN GOOD REPAIR. HOWEVER, EVIDENCE OF A SURGE OF SANCTIONS BREACHES, COUPLED WITH AN INCREASINGLY STRIDENT ANTI-WESTERN AND, MORE RECENTLY, ANTI-GULF ARAB TONE IN THE MEDIA INEVITABLY CAUSED ME TO WONDER WHETHER A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE OF COURSE WAS IN TRAIN. THE CROWN PRINCE SAID THAT I COULD BE REASSURED THAT THIS WAS ABSOLUTELY NOT THE CASE. THE ARTICLE WHICH HE HAD SENT TO THE INDEPENDENT (PUBLISHED ON 6 OCTOBER AND REPEATED IN TODAY'S JORDAN TIMES) SET OUT THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION VERY CLEARLY. HE WAS DETERMINED THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO TILT TO BAGHDAD. HE AGREED ENTIRELY THAT MOVING IN SADDAM'S DIRECTION WOULD BE A RECIPE FOR DISASTER AS FAR AS JORDAN WAS CONCERNED.

## COMMENT

6. HASSAN WAS CLEARLY ALARMED AT THE EVIDENCE OF INCREASED SANCTIONS-BUSTING AND ITS LIKELY EFFECT BOTH ON POTENTIAL DONORS AND AROUND THE ARAB WORLD. I WOULD EXPECT HIM TO TAKE URGENT REMEDIAL ACTION. AS FAR AS OVERALL JORDANIAN POLICY IS CONCERNED, HASSAN IS ALIVE TO THE DAMAGE WHICH HAS BEEN CAUSED BY THE KING'S RELUCTANCE TO CONDEMN THE INVASION OUTRIGHT AND BY HIS CONTINUAL HANKERING AFTER A COMPROMISE SOLUTION. THE KING'S RELUCTANCE TO SAY MUCH IN PUBLIC ABOUT SANCTIONS (IN CONTRAST TO THE LEADERSHIP HE SHOWS ON OTHER ASPECTS OF THE CRISIS) ALSO CONTRIBUTES TO AN IMPRESSION OF HALF-HEARTEDNESS AND PROBABLY INCREASES THE TEMPTATION AMONG INDIVIDUAL JORDANIANS TO EVADE SANCTIONS IF THEY CAN.

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