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MY TELNO 1687: SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MISSION TO ISRAEL

SUMMARY

1. EXCHANGES WITH THE AMERICANS, YEMENIS AND PLO ON SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION.

DETAIL

2. IN THE LIGHT OF EVENTS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OVER THE WEEKEND I CONCLUDED THAT I SHOULD NOT TAKE ANY INITIATIVE TO ENCOURAGE THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO RESUME CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR A STATEMENT/RESOLUTION ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MISSION TO ISRAEL. I ESTABLISHED CONTACT WITH MY U S COLLEAGUE, BUT OTHERWISE AWAITED DEVELOPMENTS. BEFORE LONG I WAS TELEPHONED BY THE YEMENI PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE: AND SUBSEQUENTLY THE ACTING PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE PLO ASKED TO CALL ON ME AS PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL.
3. PICKERING TOLD ME THAT THERE WAS NO HINT OF ANY GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN THE POSITION OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MISSION. THE PREFERRED OUTCOME OF THE CURRENT SECURITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION, FROM THE ISRAELIS' POINT OF VIEW, WOULD BE A RESOLUTION WHICH THE UNITED STATES WOULD VETO: THIS WAS HOWEVER UNLIKELY TO ARISE. THE SECOND PREFERENCE WOULD BE FOR A PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT. PICKERING CONFIRMED TO ME LATER IN THE MORNING THAT HIS INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO WORK FOR AGREEMENT IN THE COUNCIL ON A PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT: BUT HE NO DOUBT RECOGNISED THAT THE PREFERENCE AMONG COUNCIL MEMBERS MIGHT WELL BE FOR A RESOLUTION ON WHICH HE WOULD HAVE TO VOTE.
4. WHEN THE YEMENI PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE SPOKE TO ME I URGED HIM TO CONSIDER THE ADVANTAGES OF A PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT, WHICH WOULD SIGNIFY THE SUPPORT OF ALL 15 MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, AS OPPOSED TO A RESOLUTION SUPPORTED BY 14 MEMBERS. I SAID MY TASK AS PRESIDENT

WOULD BE TO SEE IF THERE WAS ANY WAY AT ALL OF PUTTING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE COUNCIL'S POSITION, ON WHICH THERE WAS ESSENTIALLY AGREEMENT, IN A FORM TO WHICH EVERYONE COULD AGREE. AT PRESENT THIS COULD ONLY MEAN A PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT. AL-ASHTAL DID NOT REJECT THE IDEA. BUT HE FORMALLY ASKED ME TO HOLD RESUMED INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS IN THE AFTERNOON.

5. WHEN THE ACTING PLO OBSERVER (AL-KIDWA) SUBSEQUENTLY CALLED ON ME HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD TAKE ACTION ON THE NON-ALIGNED DRAFT RESOLUTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, FOR THREE REASONS:

(A) TO SHOW THE COUNCIL CONSIDERED THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AS IMPORTANT AS OTHER ISSUES:

(B) BECAUSE A DELAY WOULD RENDER THE DRAFT MEANINGLESS, ESPECIALLY IF THE DEADLINE IN SCR 672 FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT WAS PASSED:

(C) BECAUSE THE WORSENING SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES REQUIRED CLEAR ACTION BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

6. I SAID I AGREED THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD TAKE ACTION AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. I THEN TOOK THE SAME LINE AS I HAD WITH AL-ASHTAL. I SUGGESTED THAT THE INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE WOULD BE BETTER SERVED BY UNANIMITY IN THE COUNCIL BECAUSE THAT WOULD COUNT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL: THE ISRAELIS WOULD BE ONLY TOO PLEASED IF THEY COULD DETACH THE AMERICANS AND GET THEM TO ABSTAIN ON A RESOLUTION.

7. AL-KIDWA AGREED THAT OUR POSITIONS WERE CLOSE. BUT HE INSISTED THAT A RESOLUTION WAS IMPORTANT BECAUSE THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT HAD NOT ONLY REFUSED TO RECEIVE THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S MISSION BUT ALSO FORMALLY REJECTED SCR 672 AS A WHOLE. THIS REQUIRED A CLEAR AND STRONG MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL TO THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. HE STRESSED THAT THE SPONSORS OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION HAD ALREADY SHOWN SOME FLEXIBILITY OVER THE TEXT AND WERE OPEN TO FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR AMENDMENTS.

8. IN RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FROM AL-ASHTAL I HAVE ARRANGED FOR RESUMED INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS OF SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS AT 222000Z. THESE WILL BE PRECEDED BY A DISCUSSION WHICH I WILL HAVE WITH PICKERING AND AL-ASHTAL, DESIGNED TO ESTABLISH WHAT COMMON GROUND THERE IS BETWEEN THEM. I HAVE PREPARED A REVISED TEXT OF MY PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT, TOUGHENED UP SLIGHTLY TO MEET THE

PLO POINT ABOUT THE ISRAELI REJECTION OF SCR 672. PICKERING IS
CONTENT FOR ME TO USE THIS AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION.

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