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FROM AMBASSADOR IN JEDDAH

SIC 19M/A2P

DEFENCE SECRETARY'S VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA: MEETING WITH SAUDI
DEFENCE MINISTER

SUMMARY

1. PRINCE SULTAN FOCUSED ON NEED FOR EARLY UN RESOLUTION GIVING SADDAM DEADLINE FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM KUWAIT: SAYS SAUDIS WOULD WELCOME DEPLOYMENT OF ADDITIONAL UK TROOPS TO KINGDOM. POSITIVE DISCUSSION ON DEFENCE SALES. BOTH PRINCE SULTAN AND PRINCE SAUD SAY SYRIA AND EGYPT STAUNCH, GIVE POSITIVE ACCOUNT OF CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER'S SECOND VISIT.

DETAIL

2. PRINCE SULTAN RECEIVED MR KING IN JEDDAH THIS AFTERNOON, AND GAVE A LUNCH IN HIS HONOUR WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY SEVERAL SENIOR AL SAUD. THE FOREIGN MINISTER, PRINCE SAUD, WAS PRESENT BRIEFLY AT THE TALKS AS WAS PRINCE TURKI AL FAISAL (GID). I HAD A SEPARATE TALK WITH SAUD IN THE MARGINS ACCOMPANIED BY YOUNG (FCO EMERGENCY UNIT)

3. PRINCE SULTAN WAS ANIMATED AND IN GOOD FORM. HIS MAIN MESSAGE WAS THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION OF NO WAR, NO PEACE MUST NOT LAST MUCH LONGER. TROOP CONTRIBUTING COUNTRIES AND THE WORLD ECONOMY WERE BEARING HEAVY COSTS. KUWAIT WAS BEING SYSTEMATICALLY DESTROYED. THERE WAS THE RISK THAT ISRAEL OR IRAQ MIGHT START SOMETHING. PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN COULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DEFEAT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. HE DID NOT EXPECT ACTION TODAY OR TOMORROW, BUT THE SECURITY COUNCIL SHOULD SET A DEADLINE BY WHICH SADDAM SHOULD BE REQUIRED EITHER TO WITHDRAW UNCONDITIONALLY OR FACE THE CONSEQUENCES. SULTAN'S CLEAR PREFERENCE WAS FOR A RESOLUTION ON THESE LINES AND HE

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RETURNED TO THE POINT REPEATEDLY, THOUGH HE ALSO SPOKE OF A RESOLUTION DELEGATING TO THE FIVE PERMANENT MEMBERS THE RIGHT TO USE FORCE OR SIMPLY AUTHORISING THE USE OF FORCE.

4. MR KING SAID THAT OUR VIEWS WERE CLOSE. WE WANTED A PEACEFUL SOLUTION, BUT THE ONLY WAY TO ACHIEVE THIS WAS TO ENSURE THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN UNDERSTOOD THAT IF HE DID NOT LEAVE KUWAIT HE WOULD BE FORCED OUT. THE CLOCK HAD STARTED WITH THE DECISION ON US REINFORCEMENTS. THERE WAS A WINDOW, AND IT WOULD CLOSE WITH THE ONSET OF RAMADAN AND THE HOT WEATHER. WE WERE AGREED ON THE DESIRABILITY OF A RESOLUTION IF WE CAN GET A SUITABLY WORDED ONE (PREFERABLY BEFORE THE YEMENI PRESIDENCY) AND WORK HAD BEGUN BEHIND THE SCENES: BUT WE WERE UNCERTAIN ABOUT THE IDEA OF SETTING A DEADLINE, WHICH MIGHT PROVOKE A PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKE. (PRINCE SAUD ALSO URGED PROGRESS HERE AND THOUGHT A DEBATE ON DESPOLIATION OF KUWAIT A GOOD LEAD-IN).

5. PRINCE SULTAN WAS SCATHING ABOUT MISREPRESENTATION BY THE WESTERN PRESS DURING THE CRISIS. BAD REPORTING COULD SHAKE THE RESOLVE OF GOVERNMENTS, AND EVEN THE SOLDIER AT THE FRONT. HE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S CONSTANCY. MR KING UNDERLINED THE NEED FOR COOPERATION IN PROPAGANDA, AND GIVING GREATER PUBLICITY TO ATROCITIES IN KUWAIT. HE ACKNOWLEDGED OUR COOPERATION WITH PRINCE TURKI ON THIS FRONT. (PRINCE TURKI TOLD ME AT LUNCH THAT OUR MATERIAL ON THIS WAS EXCELLENT. THE PROBLEM WAS TO GET IT THROUGH TO IRAQ.) ASKED BY MR KING WHETHER HE THOUGHT SADDAM WOULD EVENTUALLY WITHDRAW, PRINCE SULTAN SAID THE MAN WAS UNPREDICTABLE. IF HE DID, IT WOULD ONLY BE UNDER SHARP INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL PRESSURE. THE IRAQI PUBLIC GENERALLY TOOK THE VIEW THAT KUWAIT WAS A PART OF IRAQ: THEY NEEDED TO BE BROUGHT FACE TO FACE WITH THE COST OF SADDAM'S POLICIES. PRINCE SULTAN DID NOT THINK THAT SADDAM WOULD HAVE BEEN UNDULY SHAKEN BY THE LOSS OF HIS CHIEF OF STAFF: THE FATE OF INDIVIDUALS WAS IMMATERIAL TO HIM. WE HAD TO GET TO A WIDER SWATHE OF HIS ARMY.

6. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION, PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT EGYPT AND SYRIA WERE FIRM, BUT NEEDED EXTERNAL SUPPORT. SYRIA IN PARTICULAR NEEDED ENCOURAGEMENT FROM THE EUROPEANS, INCLUDING OURSELVES. HE ASCRIBED KING HASSAN'S CALL FOR EARLY ARAB SUMMIT TO THE PRESSURES TO WHICH THE KING WAS SUBJECT (PRINCE TURKI TOLD ME HASSAN WANTED TO BE COCK OF THE MAGHREB ROOST), BUT NOTED NEVERTHELESS THAT THE KING HAD STILL STRESSED THAT A SUMMIT MUST BE ON THE BASIS OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS. PRINCE SULTAN STRESSED THAT THERE HAD ALREADY BEEN ONE ARAB SUMMIT AND THERE

COULD ONLY BE ANOTHER IF SADDAM HUSSEIN AGREED TO WITHDRAW UNCONDITIONALLY FROM KUWAIT. PRINCE SULTAN SPOKE STRONGLY OF THE NEED FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY RESOLUTIONS IN FULL, AND DISMISSED SADDAM'S ATTEMPTS AT LINKING THE KUWAITI, LEBANESE AND PALESTINIAN QUESTIONS. HE SPOKE DISMISSIVELY OF JORDAN, YEMEN, TUNISIA, SUDAN AND THE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP, ALL OF WHOM WOULD EXPLOIT A SUMMIT AND WERE CURRENTLY ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERS TO GO TO IRAQ.

7. PRINCE SAUD TOLD ME SEPARATELY THAT THE PACIFIC PUBLIC LINE TAKEN AFTER THE TRIPARTITE MEETING IN DAMASCUS LAST WEEKEND HAD DERIVED FROM AN AGREEMENT WITH SECRETARY BAKER. HE HAD ASKED THAT, WHILE THE COALITION HAD TO PREPARE ALL POSSIBLE OPTIONS, IT SHOULD BE SEEN TO CONTINUE TO HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. BUT THIS IMPLIED NO DILUTION OF THE POLICIES OF SAUDI ARABIA, SYRIA OR EGYPT TOWARDS THE CRISIS. SAUD PERSONALLY HAD NO DOUBTS THAT SYRIA WOULD BE FIGHTING ALONGSIDE THE ALLIES IF AND WHEN THE TIME CAME.

8. SAUD TOLD ME THAT THE CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER HAD VISITED THE KINGDOM A SECOND TIME BECAUSE HE HAD NOT SEEN KING FAHD ON THE FIRST OCCASION. ACCORDING TO QIAN QICHEN, SADDAM HAD HAD NOTHING NEW TO SAY. HE HAD REITERATED HIS 12 AUGUST PROPOSALS. SADDAM HAD ARGUED THAT SINCE THE IRAQI PEOPLE WERE CRITICISING HIS RECENT AGREEMENT WITH IRAN, HE COULD CONCEDE NOTHING ON KUWAIT. QIAN QICHEN HAD DESCRIBED SADDAM AS A RATIONAL MADMAN. THE CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER HAD STRESSED THAT HE HAD BEEN CARRYING NO MESSAGE AND NO PROPOSALS TO BAGHDAD. HE HAD WANTED TO ENSURE THAT THE IRAQIS DID NOT MISJUDGE THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION. ACCORDING TO SAUD, THERE HAD BEEN NO SHIFT IN THE CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER'S POSITION BETWEEN HIS TWO VISITS TO THE KINGDOM (SEE MIFT FOR KING FAHD'S ACCOUNT).

9. ON POSSIBLE RECOURSE TO THE UN, QIAN QICHEN HAD REPEATED THE CHINESE DESIRE FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. SAUD HAD SAID THAT THAT WAS EVERYONE'S HOPE, BUT THAT MILITARY ACTION WOULD BE NEEDED IF SADDAM REFUSED TO WITHDRAW. WHEN HE HAD ASKED FOR CHINESE SUPPORT AT THE UN, QICHEN HAD SAID 'I UNDERSTAND'. HE HAD NOT ARGUED AGAINST MILITARY ACTION.

10. ON MILITARY MATTERS, MR KING SAID THE UK MIGHT ASK TO SEND MORE TROOPS: PRINCE SULTAN SAID THEY WOULD OF COURSE BE WELCOME, THOUGH THE KEY WAS QUALITY RATHER THAN QUANTITY. BFCME STRESSED

THE NEED FOR JOINT PLANNING FOR THE MILITARY OPTION: TIME WAS SHORT. PRINCE SULTAN SAID PRINCE KHALID WAS TALKING TO SCHWARZKOPF, AND SUGGESTED THAT OTHER COMMANDERS MIGHT BE INCLUDED. MR KING SAID 7TH ARMoured BRIGADE WERE NOW READY FOR OPERATION AND INVITED PRINCE SULTAN TO VISIT THEM: THE PRINCE SAID HE HOPED TO DO SO, AND LATER SAID THAT HE WOULD DO SO IN TWO WEEKS TIME. MR KING EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT AGREEMENT WOULD BE REACHED SOON ON HOST COUNTRY SUPPORT COVERING FUEL, WATER, FOOD, ACCOMMODATION AND TRANSPORT, ON THE SAME BASIS AS THE US: PRINCE SULTAN CONFIRMED HE WANTED IT AGREED. HE AGREED MR KING'S REQUEST THAT A WAVELENGTH BE ALLOCATED FOR UK FORCES BROADCASTING ON A TRIAL BASIS AND TOLD HIS STAFF TO FIX IT. HE SUGGESTED THAT STAFF STUDY OUR IDEA THAT KUWAITI CHIEFTAIN TANKS BE CO-LOCATED ALONGSIDE THE 7TH ARMoured BRIGADE IN ORDER TO ENABLE UK REME TO MAINTAIN THEM, AS THE KUWAITIS HAD REQUESTED, BUT NOTED THAT THE KUWAITI UNITS CONCERNED WERE CURRENTLY POSITIONED FAR FROM 7TH ARMoured BRIGADE. (CBFME WILL PURSUE WITH KHALID).

11. IN A FRUITFUL DISCUSSION OF EQUIPMENT SALES REPORTED IN DETAIL SEPARATELY MR KING MENTIONED THE ALARM AIR LAUNCHED MISSILE, AND SUGGESTED AN EARLY START ON BLACKHAWK HELICOPTERS WITHIN YAMAMA II. PRINCE SULTAN SAID THAT THIS SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM, AND WAS FOR DISCUSSION WITH HDES. HE PRODUCED A LIST OF DEFENCE EQUIPMENT FOR EARLY DELIVERY TO THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR DEFENCE FORCE. HE CONFIRMED THAT THIS NEW EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE OUTSIDE AL YAMAMA FUNDS.

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