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14 MAY

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TO PRIORITY ABIDJAN AND CERTAIN OTHER POSTS
TELEGRAM NUMBER 47 OF 7 MAY

INFO ADEN HAVANA KABUL MOSCOW TRIPOLI
INFO SAVING LIBREVILLE SANAA YAOUNDE.

FCO TELEGRAM NO 119 TO ANKARA AND GUIDANCE TELEGRAM NO 20 REFER:
AFGHANISTAN NEUTRALITY AND NON-ALIGNMENT

1. OUR PROPOSAL FOR A NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED AFGHANISTAN IS STEADILY GATHERING SUPPORT AND BEING CARRIED FORWARD BY OTHERS, EG HABIB CHATTY, THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE. IT WAS ENDORSED IN THE DECLARATION ISSUED AT THE END OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG ON 27/28 APRIL (THE RELEVANT PART OF THE TEXT IS IN MIFT).

SOVIET REACTIONS.

2. WE HAVE HAD A NUMBER OF BILATERAL EXCHANGES WITH THE RUSSIANS IN THESE WE HAVE OUTLINED OUR IDEAS, BUT HAVE DELIBERATELY NOT ENTERED INTO DETAIL IN ORDER NOT TO PROVIDE THE RUSSIANS WITH EASY TARGETS TO KNOCK DOWN AND THUS DISMISS THE PROPOSAL OUT OF HAND. THE SOVIET RESPONSE HAS BEEN TO AGREE IN PRINCIPLE TO THE IDEA OF A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT BUT TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT, FOR THE MOMENT AT LEAST, THEY ARE NOT READY TO DEPART FROM THEIR OWN PRE-CONDITIONS. THE RUSSIANS HAVE SAID THEY WILL NOT WITHDRAW THEIR TROOPS UNTIL ASKED TO DO SO BY THE KABUL REGIME, AND THAT THERE CAN BE NO TALK OF WITHDRAWAL UNTIL ALLEGED INTERFERENCE FROM OUTSIDE AFGHANISTAN STOPS. THEY HAVE ALSO SAID THAT THE FUTURE STATUS OF AFGHANISTAN CANNOT BE DECIDED WITHOUT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BABRAK REGIME. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY HAVE BEEN CAREFUL TO AVOID SAYING THAT THE CONCEPT OF A NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED AFGHANISTAN IS UNACCEPTABLE. THERE SEEMS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE RUSSIANS CAN BE BROUGHT TO ACCEPT OUR IDEA AS A BASIS FOR SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS AT THIS STAGE. BUT WE SHALL CONTINUE TO ADVOCATE IT WIDELY AS A MEANS OF EXERTING INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PRESSURE AND FACING THE RUSSIANS WITH QUESTIONS TO WHICH THEY HAVE NO CONVINCING ANSWER. WE ALSO INTEND TO CONTINUE OUR EXCHANGES WITH THE

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RUSSIANS.

3. MEANWHILE, SOVIET EFFORTS ARE BEING DIRECTED TO GETTING RECOGNITION FOR THE BABRAK GOVERNMENT AND TRYING TO DIVIDE AND WEAKEN OPPOSITION TO THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN. WE CONSIDER THIS TO BE THE REAL AIM OF THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT PLAN ANNOUNCED ON 17 APRIL, WHICH WE BELIEVE WAS PREPARED BY THE RUSSIANS. IT CALLS FOR

- A) BILATERAL TALKS WITH IRAN AND PAKISTAN:
- B) A REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR A PEACE FRAMEWORK-
- C) REGIONAL TALKS TO REDUCE LEVEL OF ARMED FORCES AND MILITARY SPENDING:
- D) TALKS TO REDUCE TENSION: AND
- E) CONSULTATIONS AMONG LITTORAL STATES ABOUT INDIAN OCEAN AND GULF PEACE ZONE UNDER INTERNATIONAL GUARANTEES.

IT ECHOES OLD SOVIET IDEAS ABOUT ASIAN COLLECTIVE SECURITY. THERE WAS NO MENTION OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS, NOR OF AFGHANISTAN'S RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND NON-ALIGNED STATUS.

4. DURING HIS VISIT TO PARIS FROM 23-25 APRIL MR GROMYKO DISCUSSED SOVIET POLICY AT LENGTH WITH THE FRENCH. HIS THESIS REMAINED THAT THE PROBLEM STEMMED FROM EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE, MAINLY FROM PAKISTAN (HE SPOKE LITTLE OF INTERFERENCE FROM IRAN). HE CLAIMED THAT THE ONLY WAY OUT WAS AN UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE BABRAK REGIME AND THE PAKISTAN (AND IRANIAN) GOVERNMENT. MR GROMYKO ENVISAGED A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN WHICH, AFTER A SERIES OF DIRECT CONTACTS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED, EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE WOULD END, GUARANTEES WOULD BE GIVEN BY THE MAJOR POWERS (PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES, THOUGH THE SOVIET UNION WAS NOT EXCLUDED) THAT INTERFERENCE WOULD CEASE, AND FINALLY SOVIET FORCES WOULD WITHDRAW FROM AFGHANISTAN. THE FRENCH HAVE TOLD US THAT GROMYKO'S AIM WAS QUITE CLEARLY TO LEGITIMISE THE PRESENT REGIME IN KABUL. GROMYKO CONCEDED THAT THE REBELS NUMBER TENS OF THOUSANDS. HE CLAIMED THAT INFILTRATION WOULD BE FAR WORSE IF THE SOVIET ARMY WAS NOT PRESENT.

5. THE SOVIET UNION SEEMS TO HAVE PERSUADED CUBA, AS CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, TO MAKE THE RUNNING FOR THEM IN AN EFFORT TO DRUM UP SUPPORT FOR SOVIET AIMS. MALMIERCA,

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THE CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER, LEFT HAVANA ON 29 APRIL ON HIS THIRD TOUR IN CONNECTION WITH AFGHANISTAN, PLANNING TO VISIT VIENNA, TEHRAN, COLOMBO, BELGRADE AND POSSIBLY OTHER CAPITALS INCLUDING ISLAMABAD. MEANWHILE THE CUBAN VICE-PRESIDENT, ALMEIDA, HAS BEEN TOURING AFRICAN CAPITALS. THE CUBANS HAVE TRIED TO PERSUADE THE PAKISTANIS TO TALK DIRECT TO THE BABRAK GOVERNMENT. THE PAKISTANIS HAVE REFUSED ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY ARE BOUND BY THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE RESOLUTION TO HAVE NO CONTACTS WITH THE AFGHAN REGIME. CUBAN EFFORTS ARE DIRECTED AT WINNING SUPPORT AMONGST MEMBERS OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE AS WELL AS IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AS A WHOLE FOR A SOLUTION ON THE LINES OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL.

NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED PROPOSAL.

6. THERE IS SO FAR LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT THE SOVIET UNION IS GAINING GROUND WITH THESE INITIATIVES. BUT IT IS IMPORTANT, IF THERE IS TO BE ANY HOPE OF PERSUADING THE SOVIET UNION TO WITHDRAW FROM AFGHANISTAN AND TO ACCEPT A NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED GOVERNMENT THERE, THAT THE MOMENTUM OF OUR OWN PROPOSALS SHOULD BE MAINTAINED. SOLID SUPPORT AT THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE WILL BE ESPECIALLY VALUABLE. IT IS HELPFUL THAT HABIB CHATTY PROPOSES HIMSELF TO PRESS HIS OWN THINKING ON NEUTRALITY AND NON-ALIGNMENT AT THE CONFERENCE. HE HAS APPARENTLY GIVEN CONSIDERABLE THOUGHT TO THE QUESTION OF HOW TO PRODUCE A NEUTRAL GOVERNMENT IN KABUL. THE PAKISTANIS HAVE ALSO BEEN ACTIVE IN PRE-CONFERENCE LOBBYING, ALTHOUGH WE SUSPECT THAT THEY HAVE AIMED MAINLY AT THE NEED TO RE-AFFIRM CRITICISM OF THE SOVIET UNION. ELSEWHERE THERE HAVE BEEN SOME ENCOURAGING RESPONSES TO THE NEUTRALITY PROPOSAL, BUT THE PALESTINE AND IRANIAN SITUATION WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT TO KEEP AFGHANISTAN IN THE FOREFRONT AT THE CONFERENCE. AMONGST THE NON-ALIGNED, WE SENSE THAT THE INDIANS ARE INCREASINGLY DISENCHANTED WITH SOVIET ACTION, THOUGH NOT YET READY TO SPEAK OUT. THEIR THINKING TENDS TOWARDS 'AN INDEPENDENT AND NON-ALIGNED AFGHANISTAN', AND THEY AVOID (POSSIBLY BECAUSE INITIALLY THEY CONFUSED NEUTRALITY AND DEMILITARISATION) THE TERM NEUTRALITY. THIS IS NOT A SERIOUS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US: PROVIDED ANY SOLUTION ESTABLISHED GENUINE INDEPENDENCE, THIS WOULD BE WHOLLY IN

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KEEPING WITH OUR AIM OF A NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED AFGHANISTAN.

7. ANOTHER IDEA THAT MAY BE INTRODUCED AT THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE IS THAT OF AN ISLAMIC PEACEKEEPING FORCE, WHICH COULD INCLUDE ALGERIANS, SYRIANS, IRAQIS AND PAKISTANIS. EVEN IF THIS CAME TO NOTHING, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR THE RUSSIANS TO OPPOSE.

8. WITHIN THE NINE THE ITALIANS HAVE BEEN PRESSING FOR THE NEUTRALITY CONCEPT TO BE WORKED OUT IN DETAIL. WHILE WE RECOGNISE THAT A STAGE WILL ARRIVE WHEN DETAILED DISCUSSION IS NECESSARY, WE HAVE SO FAR CONSIDERED THE BEST TACTIC TO KEEP THE RUSSIANS GUESSING WHAT PRECISELY WE HAVE IN MIND. WE ARE ALSO ANXIOUS TO AVOID HAVING THE INITIATIVE TAGGED AS SOLELY A 'EUROPEAN' IDEA, AND FOR THIS REASON WOULD PREFER THAT THE ISLAMIC AND NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES SHOULD NOW TAKE THE LEAD IN DEVELOPING THE CONCEPT.

9. (ALL POSTS). WHERE THE RESPONSE OF HOST GOVERNMENTS HAS BEEN EVASIVE OR LESS FIRM THAN IT COULD BE, EG MUSCAT, BELGRADE AND BAHRAIN (WALKER'S TELELETTER OF 10 APRIL TO MIERS AND LUCAS' TELELETTER OF 15 APRIL TO MIERS), POSTS SHOULD SPEAK AGAIN TO HOST GOVERNMENTS DRAWING ON THE PARAGRAPHS ABOVE (INCLUDING PARAGRAPH 7) AND ON PARAGRAPHS 13 AND 14 AS APPROPRIATE AND URGING CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE IDEA OF A NEUTRAL AND NON-ALIGNED AFGHANISTAN, AND FOR THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF SOVIET TROOPS.

SIMILAR ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN IN POSTS WHERE THE CUBAN EMISSARIES HAVE BEEN SELLING THEIR 'INITIATIVE'. IN PARTICULAR, POSTS IN ISLAMIC COUNTRIES SHOULD STRESS THE IMPORTANCE OF FIRM ACTION BY THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE TO A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE AFGHANISTAN PROBLEM. POSTS SHOULD ALSO STRESS THE CONTINUING EVIDENCE OF WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION WITHIN AFGHANISTAN TO THE BABRAK GOVERNMENT AND SOVIET FORCES. TRANSCRIPTS OF RECENT BBC WORLD SERVICE NEWS ITEMS ARE IN MY SECOND IFT AND MY TELNO 68 TO VIENNA (NOT TO POSTS WHO HAVE RECEIVED RETRACT 180). THESE PROVIDE USEFUL AND CREDIBLE EVIDENCE OF SUSTAINED AFGHAN OPPOSITION.

10. POSTS SHOULD KEEP IN TOUCH WITH COLLEAGUES OF THE NINE ABOUT CARRYING OUT THESE INSTRUCTIONS, PARTICULARLY THE PRESIDENCY. MEANWHILE WE ARE INFORMING PARTNERS IN CAPITALS OF THE NINE OF THE INSTRUCTIONS BEING SENT TO OUR POSTS, MAKING CLEAR THAT THESE WILL

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BE IMPLEMENTED IN CONSULTATION WITH COLLEAGUES OF THE NINE.

11. (FOR RABAT) IN VIEW OF BOUCETTA'S COMMENTS (DAWBARN'S LETTER OF 14 APRIL TO WHITE REFERS), WE ARE CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF A MESSAGE TO HIM.

12. (FOR CANBERRA AND WELLINGTON) CANBERRA TELEGRAM NO 286 REFERS. CONTINUING AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND INTEREST IS WELCOME. IN SEPTEMBER A REGIONAL COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING IS DUE TO BE HELD IN DELHI, AND WE ARE BEARING IN MIND THE POSSIBILITY THAT THIS COULD BE A SUITABLE OCCASION ON WHICH TO SECURE A PUBLIC CONDEMNATION OF SOVIET ACTIONS, WITH WHICH THE INDIANS WOULD BE ASSOCIATED. A SUMMARY OF WORLDWIDE REACTIONS TO THE PROPOSAL FOLLOWS BY BAG.

IRAN.

13. THE IRANIANS ARE ATTEMPTING TO MOUNT A PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN PRESENTING THEMSELVES AS THE AGGRIEVED PARTY IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HOWEVER, IT IS THEIR CONTINUED ILLEGAL DETENTION OF THE US HOSTAGES WHICH POSES THE REAL THREAT TO STABILITY. WHERE APPROPRIATE, YOU SHOULD URGE STATES ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE TO TAKE THE LINE THAT THE TIME HAS COME FOR IRAN, WHOSE EMBASSY IN LONDON WAS ITSELF RECENTLY OCCUPIED AND THE STAFF TAKEN HOSTAGE, BUT LATER RELEASED, TO MAKE A MAGNANIMOUS GESTURE AND RELEASE THE AMERICAN DIPLOMATS.

(TO ARAB COUNTRIES). IN PARTICULAR, THE EQUIVOCAL ATTITUDE OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES TO SUCH ILLEGAL ACTION, AS EVIDENCED BY THE REFUSAL OF THEIR AMBASSADORS IN LONDON TO MEDIATE OVER THE SIEGE OF THE IRANIAN EMBASSY EXCEPT IN ORDER TO NEGOTIATE A SAFE DEPARTURE FOR THE TERRORISTS, ONLY SERVES FURTHER TO ENDANGER STABILITY, AND INDEED TO PUT AT RISK THE ENTIRE WORLD DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY, INCLUDING THEMSELVES.

ARAB/ISRAEL.

14. THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE HAS TRADITIONALLY CONCERNED ITSELF PRIMARILY WITH THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE. THE ARABS HAVE TENDED TO ARGUE THAT THEY CANNOT COOPERATE FULLY WITH THE WEST OVER AFGHAN-ISTAN BECAUSE WESTERN POLICIES IN THE ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE HAVE NOT TAKEN SATISFACTORY ACCOUNT OF ARAB AND ISLAMIC CONCERNS. THEY HAVE EQUATED ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF ARAB LAND, PARTICULARLY EAST

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JERUSALEM, WITH SOVIET OCCUPATION OF AFGHANISTAN, AND ARGUED THAT THE FORMER IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THEM. YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR IN RESPONSE TO THIS ARGUMENT THAT WE RECOGNISE THE URGENCY OF THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE PEACE SETTLEMENT INVOLVING AN END TO ISRAELI OCCUPATION AND SATISFACTION OF LEGITIMATE PALESTINIAN POLITICAL RIGHTS. WHILE WE CONTINUE TO HOPE FOR A POSITIVE OUTCOME FROM THE CAMP DAVID AUTONOMY TALKS, EUROPE IS READY TO HELP KEEP MOMENTUM GOING IN PEACE EFFORTS IF THE AMERICANS ARE UNABLE TO DO SO. WE WISH TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH ARAB AND ISLAMIC COUNTRIES IN THIS SEARCH. BUT WHILE PROGRESS IN THE ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE WILL CONTRIBUTE TO GREATER REGIONAL STABILITY, IT WILL NOT OF ITSELF GET THE RUSSIANS OUT OF AFGHANISTAN OR REMOVE THE THREAT TO OTHER ISLAMIC COUNTRIES FROM SOVIET EXPANSIONISM.

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