

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES ~~4~~ x17

**IMMEDIATE**

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Ps | NO 10 DOWNING STREET (3)  
CABINET OFFICE D10

**ADVANCE COPY**

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GVA/FO 002/007

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM UKMIS GENEVA 071720Z SEPT 1983

TO IMMEDIATE FCO TELNO 350 OF 7 SEPTEMBER 1983

INFO PRIORITY UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO ROUTINE WASHINGTON, CAIRO, TEL AVIV, DAMASCUS, TUNIS,  
AMMAN AND ATHENS.

INFO SAVING ALGIERS, TRIPOLI, RABAT, KUWAIT, JEDDA, ABU DHABI,  
TEHRAN, BAHRAIN, DOHA, DELHI, KUALA LUMPUR, PEKING, MOSCOW,  
DAKAR, PARIS, VIENNA, UKREP BRUSSELS, MADRID, SERNE AND VALLETTA.

MY TELNOS 342 AND 343: PALESTINIAN CONFERENCE.

SUMMARY

1. THE CONFERENCE ENDED AS PLANNED ON THE AFTERNOON 7 SEPTEMBER  
WITH THE ADOPTION BY CONSENSUS OF TWO PRINCIPAL DOCUMENTS: A  
"DECLARATION OF GENEVA" AND A PROGRAMME OF ACTION. THE DECLARATION,  
AMID MUCH VERBIAGE ON PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, INCLUDES RECOGNITION  
OF "THE RIGHT OF ALL STATES IN THE REGION TO EXISTENCE WITHIN  
SECURE AND INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED BOUNDARIES", ON THE BASIS  
THAT PALESTINIAN RIGHTS ARE ALSO HONOURED., AND CALLS FOR THE  
CONVENING OF A NEW PEACE CONFERENCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST

2. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS LESS AGGRESSIVE THAN EXPECTED. EXTREMIST  
ORATORY WAS TO SOME EXTENT MUTED IN FAVOUR OF A CONSENSUS OUTCOME  
FURTHER COMMENT IS IN PARA 9 BELOW. 137 GOVERNMENTS PARTICIPATED,  
20 OF THEM AS OBSERVERS. 43 MINISTERS ATTENDED.

DETAIL

DOCUMENTARY OUTCOME

... THESE PAGES IN LENGTH WAS BASED ON A

#### DETAIL

#### DOCUMENTARY OUTCOME

3. THE DECLARATION (THREE PAGES IN LENGTH) WAS BASED ON A RELATIVELY MODERATE DRAFT PREPARED BY THE MALTESE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE IN NEW YORK, AMBASSADOR GAUCI, AND CIRCULATED IN NEW YORK, AFTER SOME ARAB STIFFENING, IN EARLY AUGUST. IT INCLUDED THE PASSAGE QUOTED ABOVE. LABORIOUS DEBATE, TOGETHER WITH ATTEMPTS BY RUSSIANS, SYRIANS AND OTHERS TO STIFFEN IT FURTHER, HAD LITTLE EFFECT IN THE FACE OF ROBUST INSISTENCE BY SWEDEN WITH SOME WESTERN SUPPORT THAT THEY WOULD CALL FOR A VOTE IF ANYTHING NOT FULLY ACCEPTABLE WERE RETAINED. THE PLO ATTACHED CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO A CONSENSUS OUTCOME, SO THIS LINE CARRIED THE DAY. IN ADDITION TO DEVOTING MUCH SPACE TO PALESTINIAN RIGHTS, THE DECLARATION CALLS FOR THE CONVENING OF AN "INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE ON THE MIDDLE EAST" UNDER UN AUSPICES. THE PLO IS DESCRIBED AS "THE REPRESENTATIVE (SIC) OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE", I.E. WITHOUT THE QUALIFICATIONS "SOLE AND LEGITIMATE".

4. THE LENGTHY PROGRAMME OF ACTION, WHICH HAS A LOWER STATUS THAN THE DECLARATION, IS A MIXED BAG. THE FINAL VERSION IS MUCH CHANGED FROM THE VERSION CIRCULATED BEFORE THE CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK. MANY POINTS IN IT PROVED CONTENTIOUS AND IT WAS ACCEPTED BY CONSENSUS BUT ON THE BASIS THAT PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE MIGHT SEND IN WRITTEN RESERVATIONS AFTER THE CONFERENCE WAS OVER ON POINTS WITH WHICH THEY DISAGREE.

#### ATMOSPHERE

5. THIS HAS BEEN SURPRISINGLY RELAXED. THE WHOLE THRUST OF THE CONFERENCE WAS ONE-SIDED, BUT THE TONE MUCH LESS SHRILL THAN THE ISRAELIS PREDICTED. CRITICISM WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY LIMITED TO ISRAEL AND THE USA. LEADING ISRAELI PEACE CAMPAIGNERS AND OTHER DISTINGUISHED INDIVIDUALS ADDRESSED THE CONFERENCE TO GOOD EFFECT. THE ABSENCE OF THE US AND THE TEN EFFECTIVELY DEPRIVED THE SOVIET UNION AND ITS SURROGATES OF ANY SERIOUS SPARRING PARTNER. THE RUSSIANS USED EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO DISCREDIT US PROPOSALS AND PROMOTE THEIR OWN, BUT FAILED TO SET THE TONE. EVEN THE TOUGHER ARAB COUNTRIES, NOTABLY SYRIA AND (ON THIS OCCASION) JORDAN, WERE NOT PREPARED TO BE SO NEGATIVE AS THE SOVIET BLOC. THE PLO AIMED THROUGHOUT FOR A CONSENSUS OUTCOME, NO DOUBT TO REGISTER A SUCCESS WHICH WOULD HELP TO BOLSTER ARAFAT'S POSITION WITHIN THE PLO AND WITH THE ARAB STATES.

6. IN AN ECCENTRIC INCIDENT, AMBASSADOR GAUCI (WHO HAD MEANWHILE BEEN ELECTED RAPPORTEUR) ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM VALLETTA THAT HE WAS WITHDRAWING FROM THE CONFERENCE ON THE GROUNDS THAT HIS EFFORTS TO RELEASE A MALTESE COMPANY FROM THE ARAB BLACKLIST HAD FAILED. THIS GESTURE HAS BEEN IGNORED, AND SERVED MERELY TO DAMAGE THE PRO-ARAB IMAGE OF MALTA.

7. THE SWEDES AND AUSTRIANS, AND TO A LESSER EXTENT THE TURKS, FINNS AND SPANIARDS, DEFENDED MODERATION WITH SOME SUCCESS. GREECE, ALTHOUGH A FULL PARTICIPANT, WAS ALMOST INVISIBLE. THE PRESENCE AS OBSERVERS OF THE REST OF THE TEN

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SUCCESS. GREECE, ALTHOUGH A FULL PARTICIPANT, WAS ALMOST  
INVISIBLE. THE PRESENCE AS OBSERVERS OF THE REST OF THE TEN  
DEMONSTRATED OUR RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE CONFERENCE,  
BUT ALSO OUR INTEREST IN ITS SUBJECT AND SERVED INDIRECTLY TO  
ENCOURAGE THE MODERATES.

#### CONCLUSIONS

8. THE CONFERENCE, THOUGH Milder THAN EXPECTED, WAS STILL  
BASICALLY FLAWED BY ITS ESSENTIALLY PROPAGANDISTIC NATURE.  
THE PARAGRAPH IN THE DECLARATION ACKNOWLEDGING THE RIGHT TO  
THE EXISTENCE OF ALL STATES IN THE AREA, THOUGH HEAVILY  
QUALIFIED AND OUTBALANCED BY THE EMPHASIS ON PALESTINIAN  
RIGHTS IN THE REST OF THE DECLARATION, IS HOWEVER SEEN BE SOME  
HERE AS A MINIMAL STEP FORWARD IN THIS VERY PUBLIC CONTEXT,  
AND A GOOD OMEN FOR DISCUSSIONS ON ARAB/ISRAEL AT THIS  
YEAR'S GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

9. OUR DECISION TO ATTEND AS OBSERVERS HAS BEEN VINDICATED.  
WE HAVE RECEIVED LITTLE CRITICISM AND A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF  
WELCOME. OUR PART IN HELPING TO ACHIEVE CONSENSUS AMONG THE TEN  
ON ATTENDANCE AS OBSERVERS IS ALSO KNOWN AND APPRECIATED BY  
ARAB DELEGATIONS.

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SENT AT 071850Z MD/JB