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TO ROUTINE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2211 OF 23 JULY

INFO ROUTINE BONN PARIS OTTAWA UKMIS NEW YORK PRETORIA

INFO SAVING LUANDA MAPUTO

US/SOUTH AFRICA: US REACTION TO STATE OF EMERGENCY

SUMMARY

1. ADMINISTRATION CLEARLY CONCERNED BY DETERIORATING SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, THOUGH ''CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT'' IS STILL THE WATCHWORD.

DETAIL

2. ASKED ON 23 JULY ABOUT THE EFFECT OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY ON THE FUTURE OF ''CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT'', THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT, SHULTZ AND OTHER SENIOR OFFICIALS REMAINED FIRMLY COMMITTED TO THE BASIC US POLICY OBJECTIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, IE PROMOTING PEACEFUL CHANGE AWAY FROM APARTHEID, REDUCING CROSS-BORDER VIOLENCE, AND BRINGING ABOUT THE INDEPENDENCE OF NAMIBIA AND THE WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN TROOPS FROM ANGOLA. THE ADMINISTRATION CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT US INFLUENCE COULD AND SHOULD BE USED FOR POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE REGION. THE SPOKESMAN RESISTED BEING DRAWN INTO A DISCUSSION ON WHETHER THE US WAS AS ATTACHED TO THE MEANS IT HAS BEEN EMPLOYING IN PURSUIT OF THESE OBJECTIVES AS IT WAS TO THE OBJECTIVES THEMSELVES. HE SUMMED UP, HOWEVER, BY REITERATING THE US COMMITMENT TO CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND THE US OPPOSITION TO SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA.

3. THE WHITE HOUSE AND STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMEN BOTH MADE CLEAR ON 22 JULY THE CONCERN WITH WHICH THE ADMINISTRATION REGARDED THE STATE OF EMERGENCY. THE TONE OF THE TWO STATEMENTS WAS SHARPER THAN THE ADMINISTRATION'S INITIAL REACTION OVER THE WEEKEND, BUT STOPPED SHORT OF EXPLICIT CRITICISM OF THE STATE OF EMERGENCY ITSELF. THE WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN ARGUED THAT THE CURRENT VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA WAS IN NO-ONE'S INTEREST, AND CALLED ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO EXERCISE THEIR RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAW AND ORDER IN A QUOTE SCRUPULOUS MANNER UNQUOTE. THE US CONSIDERED APARTHEID LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CURRENT VIOLENCE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, MEANWHILE, SYMPATHISED WITH THE VICTIMS OF THE VIOLENCE AND LOOKED TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO CONDUCT ITSELF QUOTE RESPONSIBLY, RESPECTING THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF ALL ITS CITIZENS UNQUOTE. BOTH SPOKESMEN CALLED ON ALL SOUTH AFRICANS TO PUT VIOLENCE BEHIND THEM AND TO GET BACK TO THE TASK OF MOVING AWAY FROM APARTHEID.

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4. THE PRESIDENT DID NOT RESPOND TO QUESTIONS ABOUT SOUTH AFRICA DURING A BRIEF EXCHANGE WITH THE PRESS AT THE WHITE HOUSE TODAY, IN THE MARGINS OF HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LI.

FCO PASS SAVING LUANDA AND MAPUTO

WRIGHT

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