

ADVANCE COPY

CONFIDENTIAL
 FM WASHINGTON
 TO DESKBY 230100Z FCO
 TELNO 2013
 OF 222355Z AUGUST 90
 INFO DESKBY 230100Z UKMIS NEW YORK
 INFO IMMEDIATE MOSCOW, PARIS, PEKING, BAGHDAD, SANA'A, ESC LONDON
 INFO IMMEDIATE ACTOR

IRAQ/KUWAIT: NEXT STEPS IN NEW YORK
 SUMMARY

1. PRESIDENT BUSH HAS QUOTE RELUCTANTLY DECIDED UNQUOTE TO ACCEED TO RUSSIAN REQUEST FOR 48 HOUR MORATORIUM ON INTERDICTION OF IRAQI SHIPPING. US WILL THEREFORE PRESS FOR A RESOLUTION ON THE BASIS OF A MORATORIUM ON NAVAL ACTION UNTIL 1800 EDT ON 24 AUGUST. IF A RESOLUTION IS UNOBTAINABLE BY THEN, US WILL TAKE ACTION UNDER ARTICLE 51. THEY HAVE SUGGESTED US/UK/FRENCH CO-ORDINATION MEETINGS AMONG COMMANDERS IN THE GULF.

DETAIL

2. KIMMITT ASKED ME AND THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO CALL LATE ON 22 AUGUST. KIMMITT SAID THAT BAKER AND SHEVARDNADZE HAD SPOKEN TODAY. THE RUSSIANS WERE NOT PREPARED TO VOTE FOR A RESOLUTION THAT WOULD AUTHORISE IMMEDIATE ACTION AGAINST IRAQI SHIPPING. SHEVARDNADZE HAD ARGUED THAT ANOTHER 48 HOURS WAS NEEDED TO LET HIS STRONG MESSAGE TO HAMMADI SINK IN AND FOR THE UN PROCESS TO RUN ITS COURSE. THIS RUSSIAN POSITION HAD CAUSED DIFFICULTY IN WASHINGTON AS FIVE IRAQI VESSLES WERE DUE TO MOVE INTO YEMENI TERRITORIAL WATERS IN THE NEXT 12-24 HOURS (SEE MIFT).

3. BUT THE PRESIDENT HAD QUOTE VERY RELUCTANTLY UNQUOTE DECIDED TO ACCEED TO THE SOVIET REQUEST. THE US WOULD THEREFORE TAKE NO NAVAL ACTION FOR 48 HOURS. THE PRESIDENT HAD COME TO THIS DECISION DESPITE HIS EARLIER CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND MITTERRAND AT WHICH A COMMON VIEW HAD EMERGED THAT WE NEEDED TO ACT QUICKLY AND HAD THE AUTHORITY TO DO SO. THE PRESIDENT FELT THE BAKER/SHEVARDNADZE TALK ALTERED THINGS: WE NEEDED TO KEEP THE RUSSIANS ON BOARD. THEIR ARGUMENT WAS NOT UNREASONABLE. BUT THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT WAIT LONGER THAN 48 HOURS, AND HAD SET A DEADLINE OF 1800 HRS EDT ON 24 AUGUST. IF THE RUSSIANS DID NOT AGREE TO A RESOLUTION, THE US (AND HOPEFULLY ITS ALLIES) WOULD TAKE THE NECESSARY ACTION. KIMMITT NOTED IN THIS CONTEXT THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD NOT GIVEN A CLEAR GUARANTEE THAT THEY WOULD VOTE FOR A RESOLUTION. BUT THE US FELT THEY WERE ON BOARD AND THAT ACCEEDING TO THEIR REQUEST

WOULD REMOVE MOSCOW'S PROCEDURAL RESERVATIONS, THEREBY PUTTING THEM UNDER MORAL PRESSURE. KIMMITT FELT THAT RUSSIAN HESITATION WAS NOT BASED ON PROBLEMS WITH THE CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE RESOLUTION BUT WAS ESSENTIALLY PRESENTATIONAL IE HAMMADI'S RECENT VISIT AND THE NEED TO GIVE THE IRAQIS TIME QUOTE TO DO THE RIGHT THING UNQUOTE.

4. I SAID THAT I HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO AGREE WITH THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION. WE COULD GO ALONG WITH A 48 HOUR MORATORIUM CLAUSE (TELECON WOOD/GASS). THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR SAID HE WOULD SEEK INSTRUCTIONS.

5. KIMMITT SAID THAT PICKERING HAD NOW BEEN INSTRUCTED TO PUSH FOR AN EFFECTIVE RESOLUTION TODAY. A CLAUSE WOULD BE INSERTED IN THE DRAFT TEXT WHICH WOULD POSTPONE ACTION UNTIL 1800 EDT ON 24 AUGUST. AS A FALL-BACK, HE HOPED FOR SOVIET AGREEMENT THAT A RESOLUTION IN ITS PRESENT FORM WOULD BE ADOPTED WITHIN 48 HOURS. IF A RESOLUTION WAS NOT OBTAINABLE TODAY (OR INDEED BEFORE 24 AUGUST) THE US WOULD MAKE CLEAR TO THE RUSSIANS THAT THEY WOULD TAKE ACTION UNDER ARTICLE 51. HE BELIEVED, IN ADDITION, THAT IF A CLEAR CASE OF SANCTIONS BREACHING COULD BE SHOWN TO THE RUSSIANS BEFORE 24 AUGUST THEY WOULD AGREE TO IMMEDIATE ACTION.

5. THE PRESIDENT HAD ALSO DIRECTED SECRETARY CHENEY AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS (POWELL) TO BEGIN WORKING WITH THE BRITISH AND FRENCH GOVERNMENTS TO CO-ORDINATE THE START OF INTERDICTION OPERATIONS IN THE GULF ON THE EXPIRY OF THE US DEADLINE. THE US HOPED, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE UN HAD PASSED A RESOLUTION, THAT WE WOULD AGREE TO TAKE CONCERTED JOINT ACTION. THERE WOULD BE A MEETING OF REGIONAL COMMANDERS ON THE USS LASALLE IN BAHRAIN AT 1300 LOCAL ON 23 AUGUST TO BEGIN TO DISCUSS JOINT OPERATIONS. THERE WOULD BE A NEED TO CO-ORDINATE MILITARY ACTION AND POOL INFORMATION ON THE IRAQI-FLAGGED VESSELS WHICH WERE POTENTIAL TARGETS. KIMMITT UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS CO-ORDINATION WAS TAKING PLACE MAINLY ON MILITARY CHANNELS AND HIS BRIEFING WAS FOR INFORMATION ONLY. I SAID I WOULD NONETHELESS SEEK INSTRUCTIONS.

6. SEE MIFT (NOT TO ALL) FOR DETAILS ON IRAQI TANKERS.

WOOD

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