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M" TELNO 482 (NOT TO ALL): IRAQ/KUWAIT: VISIT OF UN SECRETARY
GENERAL TO AMMAN

SUMMARY

1. TALKS WITH IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER CONTINUING. PRESS REPORTS
INDICATE A FIRM LINE BY UN SECRETARY GENERAL ON IMPLEMENTATION OF
RESOLUTIONS. POSSIBLE BUT INCONCLUSIVE SIGNS OF IRAQI
FLEXIBILITY OVER KUWAIT; BUT EMPHASIS OF TALKS TO DATE APPARENTLY
MORE ON HUMANITARIAN THAN POLITICAL ISSUES.

DETAIL

2. THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTER HELD
TWO ROUNDS OF TALKS ON 31 AUGUST. TODAY'S LOCAL PRESS REPORTS
THAT THERE WILL BE A FURTHER MEETING TODAY AFTER DISCUSSIONS
BETWEEN QUOTE EXPERTS UNQUOTE FROM BOTH SIDES.

3. BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER HIS MEETINGS, PEREZ DE CUELLAR TOOK
PAINS TO STRESS THAT THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION OF HIS
NEGOTIATING OVER IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS.
IN HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT ON 30 AUGUST, THE SECRETARY GENERAL SAID
THAT HE WAS NOT COMING TO AMMAN TO NEGOTIATE BUT TO EXCHANGE
VIEWS WITH TARIQ AZIZ. AFTER THE TALKS, HE REAFFIRMED HIS
CONCERN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS,
ADDING THAT HE CONSIDERED THE IRAQI INITIATIVE (ON LIMITED
RELEASE OF FOREIGN CIVILIANS) AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD, BUT
STILL INSUFFICIENT; HE HOPED FOR FURTHER INITIATIVES SECURING THE
DEPARTURE OF ALL FOREIGNERS FROM IRAQ.

4. FOR HIS PART, TARIQ AZIZ CONFINED HIMSELF ON ARRIVAL TO
RHETORICAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE VICTORY OF THE ARAB NATION.
LOCAL PRESS REPORTS OF HIS REMARKS TO THE PRESS IMMEDIATELY AFTER
THE TALKS WITH PEREZ DE CUELLAR FOCUS ON HIS REPORTED ASSURANCE

TO THE LATTER THAT IRAQ WOULD NOT INITIATE A MILITARY CONFLICT, TO WHICH HE ADDED FAMILIAR EXPRESSIONS OF BLAME FOR THE WEST FOR ESCALATING THE SITUATION AND CALLS FOR AN ARAB SOLUTION. AZIZ ALSO CLAIMED THAT HE HAD ASKED PEREZ DE CUELLAR TO SEEK GUARANTEES FROM COUNTRIES DEPLOYING FORCES IN THE REGION THAT THEY WOULD NOT ATTACK IRAQ, IN RETURN FOR WHICH QUOTE THE PROBLEM OF ALL FOREIGNERS WOULD BE RESOLVED UNQUOTE. HE REITERATED IRAQ'S CALL FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION TO MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEMS, INCLUDING LEBANON AND PALESTINE.

5. SOME SIGNIFICANCE IS ATTACHED IN LOCAL PRESS REPORTS TO TARIQ AZIZ'S APPARENT REFUSAL TO COMMENT ON IRAQ'S POSITION ON KUWAIT, WHICH IS SEEN AS A POSSIBLE SIGN OF IRAQI WILLINGNESS TO MAKE CONCESSIONS (WE NOTE THAT THE BBC REFLECTS THIS). AS REGARDS IRAQ'S QUOTE COMPREHENSIVE UNQUOTE APPROACH TO THE UN RESOLUTIONS, THE SECRETARY GENERAL REPORTEDLY HOPED THAT QUOTE ALL SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS UNQUOTE COULD BE IMPLEMENTED. PEREZ DE CUELLAR SAID THAT HE WOULD BE MEETING KING HUSSEIN ON THE LATTER'S RETURN FROM HIS OVERSEAS TOUR TO OBTAIN HIS EVALUATION, AND QUOTE ADD TO HIS EFFORTS TO HELP ACHIEVE A JUST PEACE FOR THE AREA UNQUOTE.

COMMENT

6. WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN A READ-OUT OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TALKS OTHER THAN WHAT IS IN THE PRESS REPORTS. IT REMAINS UNCLEAR EXACTLY HOW MUCH LONGER THEY WILL CONTINUE, THOUGH MY FRENCH COLLEAGUE REPORTS THAT PEREZ DE CUELLAR WILL NOW LEAVE TOMORROW (2 SEPT) RATHER THAN TODAY AS SCHEDULED. ACCORDING TO BAUCHARD, THE SECRETARY GENERAL MAY NOW BE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT BRIEFING THE FIVE AMBASSADORS HERE, APPARENTLY BECAUSE HE FEARS LEAKS TO THE LARGE PRESS CORPS AT PRESENT RESIDENT IN AMMAN. BAUCHARD, WHO HAS HAD SOME CONTACT WITH FRENCH MEMBERS OF THE UN SECRETARIAT, HAS OBTAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT NEARLY ALL THE DISCUSSIONS SO FAR HAVE BEEN ABOUT HUMANITARIAN RATHER THAN POLITICAL ISSUES.

7. WE WILL REPORT FURTHER AS NEWS EMERGES.

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