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IRAQ/KUWAIT: BAKER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW, 7-9 NOVEMBER

SUMMARY

1. BAKER FINDS GORBACHEV AND SHEVARDNADZE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT A PEACEFUL OUTCOME, AND READY (RELUCTANTLY) TO CONTEMPLATE RESORT TO FORCE. GORBACHAEV UNDERLINED HIS COMMITMENT TO US/SOVIET COOPERATION, AND TO FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL UNSCR'S. POSSIBILITY THAT BUSH MAY GO TO PARIS WITH FIRM PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE ACTION.

DETAIL

2. THE US MINISTER-COUNSELLOR, COLLINS, HAS BRIEFED US ON BAKER'S DISCUSSIONS HERE LAST WEEK WITH GORBACHEV AND SHEVARDNADZE ON THE GULF. WE ARE REPORTING HIS ACCOUNT IN CASE IT ADDS TO THE INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE TO YOU. (COLLINS STRESSED THAT HE WAS ONLY PARTIALLY BRIEFED HIMSELF).

3. BAKER HAD THIRTEEN HOURS OF TALKS, TWO OF WHICH WERE WITH GORBACHEV. THE MAIN POINTS THAT EMERGED WERE:

(A) THE RUSSIANS WERE DISAPPOINTED BY THE OUTCOME OF PRIMAKOV'S DISCUSSIONS. SADDAM WAS ADAMANT THAT HE WOULD NOT COMPLY WITH THE UNSCR'S. SHEVARDNADZE APPEARED PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE CHANCES OF A PEACEFUL OUTCOME:

(B) BAKER EXPLORED POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS AT THE UN, BUT WITHOUT TRYING TO REACH AGREEMENT ON A PARTICULAR COURSE OF ACTION. HE HAD NOT WANTED TO TRY TO EXTRACT ANY COMMITMENTS BEFORE HIS SUBSEQUENT CONSULTATIONS IN LONDON AND PARIS, AND BEFORE REPORTING BACK TO THE PRESIDENT:

(C) GORBACHEV HAD EMPHASISED THREE POINTS:

(I) THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION HAD WORKED TOGETHER FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CRISIS AND WOULD WORK TOGETHER UNTIL ITS END:

(II) LIKE THE US, THE SOVIET UNION WAS UNSHAKEABLE IN ITS COMMITMENT TO THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL THE

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RELEVANT UNSCR'S. THERE COULD BE NO PARTIAL SOLUTIONS:
(III) THE BEST OUTCOME WOULD BE A NEGOTIATED ONE, BUT OTHER
POSSIBILITIES HAD TO BE EXPLORED.

4. BAKER HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE PREPARED TO
CONTEMPLATE THE MILITARY OPTION (ALBEIT RELUCTANTLY), AND MIGHT EVEN
BE COMING ROUND TO THE VIEW THAT A CONVINCING THREAT TO USE FORCE WAS
THE LAST CHANCE OF PERSUADING SADDAM TO ACCEPT A POLITICAL SOLUTION.

5. COLLINS SAID THAT BAKER SAW HIS TOUR AS PREPARATION FOR BUSH'S
BILATERALS AT THE CSCE SUMMIT. THE PRESIDENT MIGHT THEN WANT
TO PUT FIRM PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER ACTION TO THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT
OF THE OTHER PERMANENT SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS.

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