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TO IMMEDIATE LUXEMBOURG

TELNO 109

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INFO IMMEDIATE OTHER EC POSTS, WASHINGTON, BAGHDAD

FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

SECRETARY OF STATE'S CONVERSATION WITH LUXEMBOURG FOREIGN  
MINISTER

## SUMMARY

1. POOS AGREES THAT AN EC MISSION TO BAGHDAD COULD SEND THE WRONG SIGNAL. SOME FORM OF EC/IRAQ CONTACT WILL BE NEEDED BUT THE FORM SHOULD BE DISCUSSED ON 4 JANUARY. ALSO AGREES THAT WE SHOULD NOT TAKE POSITIONS WHICH PREJUDGE THAT MEETING. DETAIL
2. THE SECRETARY OF STATE TELEPHONED POOS THIS MORNING AFTER HEARING HIS INTERVIEW ON THE BBC IN WHICH HE SAID THAT HE EXPECTED TO BE MANDATED BY THE FAC ON 4 JANUARY TO VISIT BAGHDAD. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO BAKER ON 30 DECEMBER AND THERE APPEARED TO BE SOME MOVEMENT ON US/IRAQ CONTACTS ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NOTHING DEFINITE. HE THOUGHT IT VERY IMPORTANT THAT POOS SHOULD KEEP IN DIRECT TOUCH WITH THE AMERICANS OVER POSSIBLE EC CONTACTS WITH THE IRAQIS. POOS SAID THAT HE HAD ALREADY TRIED TO GET IN TOUCH WITH BAKER AND THAT HE WOULD DO SO AGAIN.
3. ASKED FOR HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE PROSPECTS, POOS SAID THAT THE MEDIA PORTRAYED AN ESCALATING WAR OF WORDS BUT HE THOUGHT THAT THERE WOULD STILL BE SOME ROOM FOR MANOEUVRE UNTIL ABOUT 10 JANUARY. HE THOUGHT THAT AT THE MEETING ON 4 JANUARY MINISTERS SHOULD REVISIT THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL WHICH UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF A CONTACT BETWEEN THE PRESIDENCY AND IRAQ IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH OTHERS, BUT WITHOUT SPECIFYING THE MANNER. BUT IT SHOULD BE QUITE CLEAR THAT SUCH CONTACTS WOULD NOT BE NEGOTIATIONS.
4. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE PRINCIPLE OF A CONTACT WAS NOW AGREED, ON THE BASIS OF FULL COMPLIANCE BY IRAQ WITH THE SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS AND IN COORDINATION WITH OTHERS. IN HIS VIEW, AN EC MISSION TO BAGHDAD BY POOS OR THE TROIKA WOULD OPEN UP THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFUSION AND DIVISION. POOS SAID THAT HE WOULD BE VERY RELUCTANT TO HAVE AN EC MISSION TO BAGHDAD

WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD SEND THE WRONG SIGNAL. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY MIGHT BE FOR TARIQ AZIZ TO VISIT EUROPE. ALL THIS WOULD NEED DISCUSSION. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT THERE WERE OTHER POSSIBILITIES AS WELL. IN ANY EVENT WE SHOULD TRY TO AVOID TAKING FIRM POSITIONS ON THE FORM OF ANY CONTACT BEFORE FRIDAY. POOS AGREED SAYING THAT IT WAS ONLY THE FORM OF THE CONTACT WHICH WAS OPEN TO DISCUSSION. HE ADDED THAT THE MEETING ON 4 JANUARY SHOULD ALSO DISCUSS THE SECURITY OF THE GULF REGION AFTER THE CRISIS. THE SECRETARY OF STATE AGREED.

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