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FM WASHINGTON

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 2850

OF 302215Z DECEMBER 87

INFO PRIORITY MOSCOW

INFO ROUTINE BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, UKDEL CSCE VIENNA

US/SOVIET RELATIONS

SUMMARY

1. PROGRAMME OF WORK BETWEEN NOW AND A MOSCOW SUMMIT TAKES SHAPE.
DETAIL

2. STATE TELL US THAT FOLLOWING A DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE US AMBASSADOR IN MOSCOW AND SHEVARDNADZE ON 26 DECEMBER, THE FOLLOWING DATES HAVE NOW BEEN TENTATIVELY AGREED FOR SHULTZ/SHEVARDNADZE MEETINGS IN THE RUN-UP TO A SUMMIT IN MOSCOW:

22-24 FEBRUARY IN MOSCOW

21-23 MARCH IN WASHINGTON

25-26 APRIL IN MOSCOW

9-10 MAY IN WASHINGTON OR GENEVA, IF NECESSARY

3. THERE ARE STILL NO AGREED DATES FOR THE SUMMIT: BUT STATE ARE PLANNING ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT WILL BE IN LATE MAY OR EARLY JUNE.

4. IN ADDITION TO THIS CYCLE OF MINISTERIAL MEETINGS, THERE WILL ALSO BE AN INTENSIVE PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS AT OFFICIAL LEVEL. ON ARMS CONTROL, THE FOCUS WILL OF COURSE BE ON THE START NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA. FURTHER BILATERAL EXCHANGES ARE ALSO PLANNED ON CW AND NUCLEAR TESTING. ON REGIONAL ISSUES, THERE WILL BE A FURTHER ROUND OF DISCUSSIONS AT ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEVEL CULMINATING IN A ROUND-UP MEETING AT THE ARMACOST/VORONTSOV LEVEL PROBABLY IN LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY.

5. ON HUMAN RIGHTS, NO DECISIONS HAVE YET BEEN TAKEN ON HOW TO FOLLOW-UP THE RATHER UNSATISFACTORY DISCUSSIONS AT THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT. STATE ARE CONCERNED THAT THE SOVIET INITIATIVE TO DISCUSS HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE LEVEL OF DEPUTY SECRETARY WHITEHEAD IN NOVEMBER WAS DESIGNED TO GET THE SUBJECT OFF THE FOREIGN MINISTERS' AGENDA. GORBACHEV'S PROPOSAL IN WASHINGTON FOR JOINT SEMINARS BETWEEN CONGRESS AND THE SUPREME SOVIET ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IS WIDELY REGARDED HERE AS A RED HERRING. THERE IS ALSO SOME BUREAUCRATIC IN-FIGHTING UNDERWAY, WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHIFTER ANXIOUS TO MAINTAIN HIS LEADING ROLE IN THIS FIELD. A FURTHER FACTOR IS THE END-GAME AT THE VIENNA CSCE MEETING, AND HOW TO PLAY THE HAND ON THE SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR A HUMAN

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RIGHTS CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW. AS SHULTZ MADE CLEAR TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON 16 DECEMBER, THE ADMINISTRATION ARE AT PRESENT TAKING STOCK OF THEIR POSITION ON ALL THIS.

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