

ADVANCE COPY

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TELNO 289

OF 240906Z FEBRUARY 88
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, MOSCOW, KABUL, UKMIS NEW YORK,
INFO IMMEDIATE UMMIS GENEVA, EUROPEAN COMMUNITY POSTS, NEW DELHI
INFO IMMEDIATE PEKING, RIYADH

AFGHANISTA: ALLIANCE PROPOSALS FOR INTERIM GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY

1. RESISTANCE SPELL OUT FORMULA FOR INTERIM COALITION GOVERNMENT. UNLIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO RUSSIANS/NAJIB BUT CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT ON EARLIER PROPOSALS. ONLY HALF OF THE CABINET TO COME FROM THE MUJAHIDEEN AND VALIDITY OF GENEVA PROCESS RECOGNISED. PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT WILL HOPE CORDOVEZ CAN NOW ACTIVATE SECOND TRACK NEGOTIATIONS AND MAKE PROGRESS BY 15 MARCH. SUGGEST HMG WELCOMES ALLIANCE STATEMENT.

DETAIL

2. MIFT CONTAINS TEXT OF A STATEMENT ISSUED ON 23 FEBRUARY BY THE RESISTANCE ALLIANCE IN PESHAWAR WHICH SETS OUT THEIR FORMULA FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE IN AFGHANISTAN.

3. THIS IS LESS EXTETME THAN IDEAS WHICH HAVE BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION AT AN EARLIER STAGE AND WHICH POSTULATED A GOVERNMENT COMPOSED EXCLUSIVELY OF THE SEVEN PARTY ALLIANCE. THE PRESENT FORMULA FILLS OUT THE ALLIANCE STATEMENT OF 31 JANUARY (MY TELNO 162 NOT TO ALL) PRINCIPALLY BY MAKING EXPLICIT THE WAY IN WHICH REFUGEES/EXILES AND THE "MUSLIMS LIVING IN AFGHANISTAN" WOULD BE INCLUDED IN A GOVERNMENT. IT CLAIMS A LESS DOMINANT ROLE FOR THE ALLIANCE IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE THAN THE PROPOSALS REPORTED IN MY TELNO 234. IT ALSO REPRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT MOVE BY THE ALLIANCE TO ACKNOWLEDGE FOR THE FIRST TIME THE VALIDITY OF THE GENEVA PROCESS.

4. NEVERTHELESS MUCH REMAINS UNCLEAR. PRESUMABLY THE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT/HEAD OF STATE AND THE 28 MEMBERS OF THE CABINET WOULD BE APPOINTED BY THE GRAND COUNCIL, AS WOULD THE MEMBERS OF THE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL. THERE IS NO INDICATION AS TO HOW THE PROPOSED ELECTION COMMISSION WOULD BE FORMED. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THERE WAS MUCH DISCUSSION AMONG THE SEVEN ALLIANCE LEADERS ABOUT

PERSONALITIES, IE WHO MIGHT ACTUALLY BE GIVEN THE TOP JOBS, BUT NOTHING COULD BE AGREED SO NO NAMES ARE INCLUDED IN THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

5. ALTHOUGH THE PROPOSED FORMULA IS MOST UNLIKELY TO BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE SOVIET UNION OR THE PRESENT KABUL REGIME (PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF ITS AIM TO VEST SUPREME POWER IN THE GRAND COUNCIL CONSISTING ONLY OF THE SEVEN ALLIANCE LEADERS), IT NEVERTHELESS REPRESENTS THE FIRST COHERENT STATEMENT BY THE ALLIANCE OF A POLITICAL PLATFORM. THERE IS EVIDENCE OF A MORE PRAGMATIC APPROACH EMERGING FROM THE INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS OF THE LAST WEEK. THE PAKISTANIS, WHO HAVE BEEN EXERTING CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE TO ACHIEVE A TOLERABLE PROPOSAL, SHOULD NOW FEEL ABLE TO FORWARD IT TO CORDOVEZ WITH A REQUEST THAT HE SHOULD ACTIVATE THE SECOND TRACK NEGOTIATIONS. THE PAKISTANIS WILL THUS BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE SOME MOVEMENT BEFORE GENEVA, AS WELL AS SHOWING AN IMPLIED APPROVAL BY THE RESISTANCE OF THE TEXTS SO FAR NEGOTIATED AT GENEVA. THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT MAY NOW HOPE THAT CORDOVEZ CAN ELICIT SOME NOT ENTIRELY NEGATIVE REACTION FROM THE RUSSIANS WHICH WILL PERMIT A REAL PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION ON THE SECOND TRACK TO BE CARRIED FORWARD. IN THIS WAY THEY COULD PERHAPS SECURE SOME MOVEMENT BY 15 MARCH, WITH THE PROSPECT OF FURTHER PROGRESS DURING THE FOLLOWING 2 MONTHS, WHICH WOULD ENABLE THEM TO PUT THEIR SIGNATURE TO THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS. IT DOES NOT OF COURSE ENTIRELY REMOVE THE PAKISTAN DILEMMA OF WHETHER TO SIGN THE AGREEMENTS WITH NAJIB. THEY WILL THEREFORE NEED TO FIND SOME WAY TO FINESSE THIS CONTINUING DIFFICULTY. THEY WILL STILL HOPE, PERHAPS, THAT IN THE FAST MOVING CURRENT SCENE CHANGES MAY TAKE PLACE BY THEMSELVES IN KABUL AS THE REALISATION OF IMPENDING SOVIET WITHDRAWAL SINKS IN.

6. I SUGGEST THAT WE SHOULD GIVE A PUBLIC WELCOME TO THE ALLIANCE STATEMENT AS EVIDENCE, FIRST THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT A BROAD-BASED TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT, AND SECONDLY THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO COOPERATE IN THE GENEVA PROCESS. WE COULD CALL UPON THE RUSSIANS AND THE KABUL REGIME TO GIVE A QUICK AND CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSE SO THAT A REAL PROCESS OF NEGOTIATION ON THIS ISSUE CAN BE ENGAGED. THIS WILL HOPEFULLY LEAD TO A SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WILL ENCOURAGE THE REFUGEES TO RETURN AS SOVIET FORCES WITHDRAW.

BARRINGTON

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