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AFGHANISTAN: UN MONITORING FORCE

SUMMARY

1. AMERICANS SOMEWHAT REASSURED AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH CORDOVEZ ABOUT THE UN MONITORING FORCE.

DETAIL

2. AMBASSADOR HELMAN AND PECK (STATE DEPARTMENT) VISITED NEW YORK ON 26 FEBRUARY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH CORDOVEZ AND GRANT (UNICEF). THEIR AIM WAS TO STIMULATE UN CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR THE RETURN OF THE REFUGEES ON THE LINES ANTICIPATED IN WASHINGTON TELNO 465, AND TO RAISE WITH CORDOVEZ THEIR DOUBTS ABOUT THE PRESENT UN PROPOSALS FOR MONITORING OF THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL.

3. ACCORDING TO THE U S MISSION, HELMAN WAS SOMEWHAT REASSURED BY HIS CONVERSATION WITH CORDOVEZ ABOUT THE MONITORING TEAM. CORDOVEZ MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE INTENDED TO DEPLOY ALL 50 OBSERVERS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENTS, AND THE AMERICANS ARE NOW UNLIKELY TO PRESS FOR AN INCREASE IN THE SIZE OF THE FORCE (PARA 6(I) OF WASHINGTON TELNO 464). HOWEVER, THEY REMAIN CONCERNED ABOUT ITS TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, AND WILL CONTINUE TO URGE THAT IT SHOULD NOT HAVE TO RELY ON THE PAKISTANI AND AFGHAN GOVERNMENTS FOR SUCH LOGISTIC SUPPORT. CORDOVEZ TOLD HELMAN THAT HE HAD RECEIVED OFFERS OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT AND AN AIRCRAFT FROM TWO MEMBER STATES.

4. THE AMERICANS URGED CORDOVEZ TO ENSURE THAT THE MONITORING FORCE WAS DEPLOYED IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT COULD CARRY OUT ITS TASK EFFECTIVELY. THEY DID NOT SUGGEST THAT ITS FUNCTIONS BE EXPANDED, BUT EMPHASISED THE NEED TO SET A NUMBER OF BENCH-MARKS BY WHICH THE PROGRESS OF THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL COULD BE MEASURED. CORDOVEZ GAVE NO RESPONSE TO THIS. HE APPEALED TO THE AMERICANS TO PROVIDE HIM WITH INFORMATION OBTAINED THROUGH NATIONAL TECHNICAL MEASURES, AND SAID THAT, WHILE THEY HAD GIVEN NO FIRM

COMMITMENT, THE RUSSIANS HAD REACTED SYMPATHETICALLY TO A SIMILAR REQUEST. HELMAN RESPONDED IN SIMILAR VEIN.

5. THE U S MISSION COMMENTED THAT CORDOVEZ WAS CLEARLY ANXIOUS TO KEEP CONTROL OF THE MONITORING OPERATION IN HIS OWN HANDS: THEY SUSPECTED THAT HE WOULD NOT IN PRACTICE ALLOW THE COMMANDER OF THE MONITORING FORCE MUCH FREEDOM OF MANOEUVRE. HE HAD GIVEN HELMAN A PAPER ON THE PROCEDURES HE PROPOSED TO USE IN RELATION TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL (A COPY, GIVEN TO US BY THE SECRETARIAT, IS BEING SENT BY BAG TO EVANS, SAD, AND WASHINGTON), WHICH THE AMERICANS ARE NOW DIGESTING.

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