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TELNO 520

OF 292350Z FEBRUARY 88

INFO IMMEDIATE ISLAMABAD, UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO PRIORITY UKMIS GENEVA, NEW DELHI, ROME, PARIS, BONN, PEKING

INFO PRIORITY RIYADH

ISLAMABAD TELNO 305 : AFGHANISTAN

SUMMARY

1. ARMACOST EMPHASISES THE IMPORTANCE FOR THE US OF OBTAINING SOVIET AGREEMENT TO CEASE MILITARY AID TO THE REGIME. SOME IRRITATION THAT THE PAKISTANIS HAVE LEFT THE US TO CORRECT AN ASSYMETRY CAUSED BY THEIR GIVING AWAY THE US AID POINT IN THE GENEVA DOCUMENTS. ARMACOST EXPECTS THAT PAKISTAN WILL IN THE END DECIDE TO SIGN. PLEA FOR THE EC TO CONSIDER CONTRIBUTING TO RESETTLEMENT AID FOR THE REFUGEES: A REQUIREMENT WHICH WOULD NEED TO BE ADDRESSED SOON.

DETAIL

2. THE MINISTER SAW ARMACOST ON 29 FEBRUARY. ARMACOST WAS OBVIOUSLY VERY TIRED AFTER HIS VISIT TO THE SUB-CONTINENT, AND PERHAPS AS A RESULT WAS INCLINED TO BE MORE DOWN-BEAT THAN USUAL, LAYING CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS ON THE PROBLEMS THAT REMAINED TO BE TACKLED.

3. ARMACOST UNDERLINED IN PARTICULAR THE IMPORTANCE OF OBTAINING AN UNDERTAKING FROM THE RUSSIAN TO CEASE MILITARY AID TO THE KABUL REGIME ON ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE AGREEMENT. QUITE APART FROM ATTITUDES IN CONGRESS, THE PRESIDENT WOULD NOT WISH TO GUARANTEE AN AGREEMENT IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH AN UNDERTAKING. THE PROPOSAL BY SOME IN CONGRESS THAT AS AN ALTERNATIVE THE US SHOULD CONTINUE GIVING AID TO THE MUJAHEDDIN THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD OF SOVIET WITHDRAWAL WAS BESIDE THE POINT: THIS PASS HAD BEEN SOLD BY PAKISTAN IN GENEVA, AND THE US HAD BEEN LEFT TO PICK UP THE PIECES.

4. ARMACOST CONTINUED THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE OF COURSE RESISTING A CUT-OFF OF AID TO KABUL. THEY HAD SUGGESTED A LINK WITH US AID TO PAKISTAN, AND ARGUED LEGAL OBLIGATIONS TO THE AFGHAN GOVERNMENT GOING BACK MANY YEARS. THE US HAD REBUTTED THESE POINTS (FOR EXAMPLE, THE MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS FORESEEN IN THE GENEVA DOCUMENTS WOULD ENABLE THE RUSSIANS TO VERIFY THAT US BILATERAL AID TO PAKISTAN WAS NOT REACHING THE RESISTANCE). BUT THE KEY POINT WAS THAT THE US WOULD NOT ACCEPT A GUARANTOR

ROLE UNLESS THE RUSSIANS CEASED MILITARY AID TO KABUL. THE FORM OF A SOVIET ASSURANCE TO THIS EFFECT HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED AS YET BUT THE SUBSTANCE WAS ESSENTIAL.

5. ON THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, ARMACOST SAID THAT US VIEWS REMAINED THAT HOWEVER DESIRABLE ADVANCE AGREEMENT WOULD BE, IN PRACTICE IT WAS VERY HARD TO SEE EITHER THE NAJIB GOVERNMENT SIGNING THEIR OWN DEATH WARRANT, OR THE RUSSIANS AGREEING TO THE OVERTHROW OF THEIR CLIENTS. THE PAKISTANIS ARGUED THAT NOT A SINGLE REFUGEE WOULD RETURN UNTIL NAJIB WAS OUT OF KABUL. THIS WAS A DOUBTFUL PROPOSITION. THE LOGIC OF THE SITUATION WAS THAT THE BEST WAY TO ENSURE THE END OF THE NAJIB REGIME WAS TO ENSURE THAT THE RUSSIANS LEFT. ARMACOST SAID THAT HIS PURPOSE IN VISITING KABUL HAD NOT BEEN TO LEAN ON THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT ON THE ISSUE OF INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS. HE HAD PUT FORWARD US VIEWS. IT WAS FOR THE PAKISTANIS TO MAKE UP THEIR MINDS. HE EXPECTED THAT IN THE END THEY WOULD SIGN THE AGREEMENTS, BUT THEY HAD NOT SIGNALLED THIS YET.

6. ARMACOST CONTINUED THAT PAKISTAN'S POLICY HAD RECENTLY BEEN DRIVEN BY DOMESTIC PRESSURE TO END THE FIGHTING. NOW THEY SEEMED

TO BE DEVOTING ALL THEIR EFFORTS TO ORGANISING A DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS FOR THEIR LATEST DIPLOMATIC TACTIC. HOWEVER THEY APPEARED TO BE MAKING LITTLE REAL PROGRESS TOWARDS A NEGOTIATED BASIS FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. THEY CLEARLY WANTED TO RETAIN AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AS POSSIBLE IN APPROACHING THE END GAME, AND TO DRIVE THE HARDEST POSSIBLE BARGAIN BOTH WITH THE RUSSIANS (OVER THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND AID TO KABUL) AND WITH THE AMERICANS (OVER US AID TO PAKISTAN). THEY SEEMED TO BE POSITIONING THEMSELVES TO SAY THAT THEY HAD ONLY SIGNED AT GENEVA UNDER AMERICAN PRESSURE. ARMACOST ADDED THAT HE TOOK SOME UMBRAGE AT THIS WHILE IN ISLAMABAD: IT WAS AFTER ALL THE PAKISTANIS (NOT THE US) WHO HAD NEGOTIATED THE PRESENT DEAL ON OFFER AT GENEVA.

7. ON THE NEXT ROUND AT GENEVA, ARMACOST SAID THAT THE MAIN ISSUES WERE THE PRECISE LENGTH OF SOVIET WITHDRAWAL (8, 9 OR 10 MONTHS) AND THE DETAILS OF FRONT LOADING (THE PAKISTANIS HAD PROPOSED THAT HALF THE SOVIET TROOPS SHOULD LEAVE WITHIN THREE MONTHS: THIS WAS LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTED). CORDOVEZ WOULD BE WORKING TO FINALISE THE DOCUMENTS. THE RUSSIANS WOULD THEN PRESS ALL CONCERNED TO SIGN THEM WITHOUT FURTHER ADD. PAKISTAN WOULD HAVE TO MAKE CLEAR AT THAT POINT THAT CORDOVEZ SHOULD USE THE REMAINING TIME BEFORE 15 MARCH TO WORK ON INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS. THE PAKISTANIS HAD TOLD ARMACOST THAT IF NECESSARY THEY WOULD

ACCEPT SOME SLIPPAGE OF THE 15 MARCH DATE TO ALLOW INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS TO BE COMPLETED (BUT THEY WOULD WANT TO HOLD TO THE 15 MAY DATE FOR ENTRY INTO FORCE, THEREBY ACCEPTING COMPRESSION OF THE PERIOD BETWEEN SIGNATURE AND ENTRY INTO FORCE).

8. ON MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS, ARMACOST NOTED THAT THE SECRETARIAT'S PROPOSALS PROVIDED ONLY FOR THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO BE INFORMED NOT CONSULTED, AND ENVISAGED MOUNTING THE OPERATION WITH EXISTING RESOURCES. US EXPERTS WERE SOMEWHAT CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRECEDENT WHICH WOULD BE SET BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ACTING ON HIS OWN IN THIS WAY. MORE GENERALLY, THE UN STILL HAD TO DO A GREAT DEAL MORE WORK ON HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS.

9. ARMACOST THEN ASKED ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR EC AID TO ASSIST WITH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT. HE NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S AGREEMENT WITH CONGRESS ON THE BUDGET MEANT THAT NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS COULD BE MADE AVAILABLE BY THE US BEYOND EXISTING RESOURCES. OFFSETS WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO FIND. THE TIME WAS APPROACHING WHEN THOSE IN THE WEST WHO SUPPORTED THE CAUSE IN AFGHANISTAN WOULD HAVE TO CONSIDER CONTRIBUTING. HE FORESAW THE NEED FOR A DONORS CONFERENCE, PROBABLY AFTER THE AGREEMENT HAD BEEN SIGNED. BUT THERE WOULD NOT BE MUCH TIME. THE US HAD NO CLEAR IDEAS ON THE FORUM. HE AGREED THAT FUNDING WOULD PROBABLY NEED TO BE DISCUSSED IN A LIKE-MINDED GROUP OF WESTERN COUNTRIES IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE COUNTRIES THAT SUPPORTED THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME IN PAKISTAN MIGHT PROVIDE A BASIS. SINCE SOME 90 PERCENT OF THE REFUGEES CAME FROM WITHIN 100 MILES OF THE BORDER, THE MOST PRACTICAL APPROACH WOULD BE TO EXTEND PROGRAMMES ALREADY OPERATING IN PAKISTAN ACROSS THE BORDER. HE HOPED THAT WE COULD STIMULATE DISCUSSION OF FUNDING WITH OUR PARTNERS SOON.

10. THE MINISTER ASKED ARMACOST WHETHER THERE WERE ANY PLANS FOR FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH THE RUSSIANS ON AFGHANISTAN IN THE COMING WEEKS. ARMACOST SAID THAT DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE PURSUED AS NECESSARY THROUGH AMBASSADORS: SHEVARDNADZE'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON ON 22-23 MARCH WOULD PROVIDE OCCASION FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AT HIGH LEVEL IF SUCH WERE NEEDED.

COMMENT

11. ARMACOST WAS UNCHARACTERISTICALLY CRITICAL OF THE PAKISTANIS. WHILE THIS MAY BE PARTLY THE RESULT OF FATIGUE, IT IS CLEAR THAT THE STRAINS BETWEEN THE US AND PAKISTAN ARE BEGINNING TO TELL AS THE END-GAME APPROACHES. ARMACOST RETURNED SEVERAL TIMES TO THE POINT THAT THE PAKISTANIS HAD NEGOTIATED THE TEXT OF THE GENEVA DOCUMENTS: BUT NOW EXPECTED THE AMERICANS TO SORT OUT THE PROBLEMS DIRECT WITH THE RUSSIANS. IT IS NOTEWORTHY IN THIS CONTEXT THAT NO SPECIAL US/SOVIET DISCUSSION APPEARS TO BE

FORESEEN IN ADVANCE OF THE SHULTZ/SHEVARDNADZE TALKS HERE ON  
22-23 MARCH.

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