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TELNO 1700
OF 151053Z OCTOBER 88
AND TO DESKBY 151200Z ATHENS
INFO IMMEDIATE ROME
INFO PRIORITY CSCE POSTS

AMENDED DISTRIBUTION 17 OCTOBER

ATHENS FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY
VISIT OF ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER: TALKS WITH GORBACHEV
SUMMARY

1. ITALIANS BRIEF TWELVE ON DE MITA'S MEETINGS WITH GORBACHEV. GORBACHEV CONCENTRATED ON EUROPE (ESPECIALLY ECONOMIC INTEGRATION) DISARMAMENT AND REGIONAL CONFLICT. ITALIANS SUPPORT A MOSCOW CONFERENCE, IF ALL THE WEST AGREE.

DETAIL

2. DE MITA HAS TWO HOURS OF TALKS WITH GORBACHEV ON 14 OCTOBER. ANDREOTTI WAS PRESENT FOR LATTER PART OF THESE AND MAY WELL GIVE YOU AN ACCOUNT OF IOANNINA. THIS AND MY TWO IFT DESKBY TELEGRAMS (NOT TO ALL) GIVE THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE COMMUNITY BRIEFING ON 15 OCTOBER. A FURTHER TTELEGRAM WILL GIVE MORE DETAILS ON HIS PROGRAMME, AND THE RUSSIAN ACCOUNT OF HS TALKS, AS REQUESTED BY THE DEPARTMENT.
EUROPE AND CSCE

3. THIS WAS GORBACHEV'S MAIN THEME. HE CONSTANTLY USED THE TERM 'COMMON EUROPEAN HOUSE,' BUT SAID HE WISHED TO DISPEL THE ASSUMPTION THAT THIS WAS A DEVICE TO EXCLUDE THE UNITED STATES OR CANADA.

4. GORBACHEV SPOKE OF DEVELOPING INTEGRATION WITHIN EUROPE. THE TWELVE HAD 1992 AS AN HORIZON, AND WERE ALSO PURSUING POLITICAL AND MILITARY INTEGRATION. FOR ITS PART, THE CMEA NEEDED RESTRUCTURING TO ALLOW FOR GREATER INTEGRATION. THE CMEA WOULD HOLD A MAJOR CONFERENCE ON THIS IN EARLY 1989.

5. BUT THE COMMUNITY, CMEA AND OTHER EUROPEAN STATES WOULD INEVITABLY COME CLEAR TOGETHER ECONOMICALLY AND IN TRADE. WE SHOULD NOW BE TALKING TO EACH OTHER ABOUT THIS, ABOUT HARMONISATION. IF A SINGLE EUROPEAN MARKET WAS EVENTUALLY FORMED WE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO DISMANTLE THE STRUCTURES NOW BEING CREATED.

6. RECALLING THAT DE MITA WAS SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS, GORBACHEV SUGGESTED HE ARRANGE A PAN-EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON OUR COMMON EUROPEAN FUTURE. DE MITA DID NOT TAKE THE BAIT.

CSCE

7. THE ITALIANS SAID THEY LOOKED FORWARD TO A BALANCED OUTCOME AT

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VIENNA. THE RUSSIANS AGREED THAT PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE AND HOPED TO CONCLUDE IN NOVEMBER, PERHAPS WITH A FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING. GORBACHEV THEN MADE A SELF-ADMITTEDLY DELHPIC REMARK ABOUT CERTIAN CIRCLES TRYING TO BLOCK PROGRESS BY TALKING ABOUT FRONTIERS, WHICH THE ITALIANS INTERPRET AS A REFERENCE TO FOREIGN SUPPORT TO NATIONALIST ASPIRATIONS IN THE BALTIC STATES.

8. THE ITALIANS SAID THEY COULD FOLLOW THE FRENCH AND ACCEPT A THREE PART CDH, WITH THE THIRD CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW. BUT THEY SAID THAT A MOSCOW CONFERENCE WOULD DEPEND ON ALL THE WEST BEING ABLE TO AGREE.

9. SEE MIFTS FOR DISCUSSION OF DISARMAMENT AND REGIONAL ISSUES.

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MIPT (NOT TO ALL): VISIT OF ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER: TALKS WITH
GORBACHEV: DISARMAMENT

CST

1. THE RUSSIANS HAD AGAIN REFERRED TO GORBACHEV'S PROPOSAL FOR A EUROPEAN REYKJAVIK TO DISCUSS CONVENTIONAL DISARMEMENT. GORBACHEV SAID THAT IT WOULD NATURALLY INCLUDE THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA. ITS PURPOSE WOULD BE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO THE CST TALKS, WHICH SHOULD NOT BE HELD UP. IF THEY COULD BE STARTED SOON, THEN THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING COULD FOLLOW SHORTLY.

CW

2. SHEVARDNADZE SPOKE WARMLY OF HIS VISIT TO PARIS. HE ESPECIALLY WELCOMED MITTERRAND'S ENDORSEMENT OF A CONFERENCE LINKED THE 1925 PROTOCOL ON CW. HE EXPLAINED TO THE ITALIANS THAT HE SAW A CONFERENCE AS BEING A LEVER TO SPUR WORK ON A CW CONVENTION IN GENEVA.

TNF

3. SHEVARDNADZE HAD ALSO WELCOMED FRENCH STATEMENTS THAT TNF MODERNISATION MIGHT BE DELAYED FOR ONE OR TWO YEARS AND RECONSIDERED THEM.

GENERAL

4. IN THE DISCUSSION ON CW GORBACHEV HAD INTERVENED TO SAY THAT HE SAW THE THREE FIELDS OF DISARMAMENT, NUCLEAR :CHEMICAL AND CONVENTIONAL AS CLOSELY LINKED. IF NO PROGRESS COULD BE MADE QUICKLY ON CW, HE WAS DOUBTFUL THAT WE COULD DO BETTER IN THE OTHER TWO FIELDS.

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ATHENS FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY

MY TWO IPTS (NOT TO ALL): VISIT OF ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER: TALKS
WITH GORBACHEV: REGIONAL ISSUES

AFGHANISTAN

1. SHEVARDNADZE HAD EXPRESSED RENEWED INTEREST IN THE PRESENCE IN ROME OF THE EX-KING. HE HAD HINTED AT A POSSIBLE ROLE FOR AHIR SHAH IN THE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION PROCESS. SHEVARDNADZE EXPRESSED CONCERN AT THE SPEED WITH WHICH THIS WAS GOING. THE RUSSIANS STILL WANTED TO WITHDRAW BY 15 FEBRUARY, BUT IF NO SOLUTION HAD BEEN REACHED THEY FORESAW ONLY A PROLONGED CONFLICT.

2. THE ITALIANS DETECTED A DIFFERENCE IN TONE BETWEEN SHEVARDNADZE AND GORBACHEV, THE LATTER BEING MORE GLOOMY. GORBACHEV HAD DWELT ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE AMERICANS WERE ABIDING BY THE GENEVA ACCORDS. IF THEY WERE NOT, IT WAS AN ISSUE WHICH COULD HAVE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES.

MIDDLE EAST

3. THE RUSSIANS EXPRESSED RELIEF THAT THE PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO MEET BEFORE THE AMERICAN AND ISRAELI ELECTIONS. IF THE HAD ISSUED A STRONGLY WORDED DECLARATION IT COULD HAVE DAMAGED THE PEACE PROCESS

4. THE RUSSIANS SAID THAT THE PEACE PROCESS SHOULD NOT REMAIN STALLED ONCE THE ELECTIONS WERE OVER. THE ITALIANS REPLIED THAT THEY WOULD PICK UP THE BATON WHEN THEY CHAIRED THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN NOVEMBER

5. SHEVARDNADZE SUPPORTED THE FRENCH IDEA OF HAVING A PREPARATORY COMMITTEE WORK ON THE FEASIBILITY OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ETHIOPIA

5. THE ITALIAN DETECTED A SEA-CHANGE IN THE SOVIET POSITION. THE RUSSIANS WERE NOW URGING MENGISTU TO FIND A POLITICAL SOLUTION GIVING THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE AUTONOMY TO ERITREA.

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