

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 3041

INFO PRIORITY AMMAN, TEL AVIV, CAIRO

ROUTINE OTHER MIDDLE EAST POSTS, UKMIS NEW YORK

INFO SAVING MOSCOW, BONN, PARIS, ROME

AMMAN TELNO 588: ARAB/ISRAEL: PEACE PROCESS  
SUMMARY

1. THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS NOT EXPECTING ANY EARLY MOVE BY HUSSEIN. CONFIDENCE THAT THE PEACE PROCESS IS STILL IN TRAIN SEEMS MORE MUTED.

DETAIL

2. KIRBY (STATE DEPARTMENT) BRIEFED US ON 4 NOVEMBER ABOUT PRIME MINISTER RIFAI'S ACCOUNT TO THEM OF THE JORDAN-PLO TALKS. (THEY HAVE NOT YET HEARD THE KING'S ACCOUNT: THEIR AMBASSADOR HAS BEEN HERE FOR A US/JORDAN JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION MEETING, ON WHICH WE ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY.)
3. RIFAI TOLD THE US CHARGE ON 29 OCTOBER THAT BOTH HE AND KING HUSSEIN HAD BEEN TOUGH AND DIRECT WITH ARAFAT. REPORTS FROM PLO SOURCES TO THE CONTRARY WERE WRONG AND SELF-SERVING. THE KING HAD DEMANDED THAT ARAFAT EXERCISE TIGHTER CONTROL OF HIS ORGANISATION AND HAD GIVEN A QUOTE ULTIMATUM UNQUOTE ON VIOLENCE: THE PLO WAS TO CEASE ALL VIOLENCE OUTSIDE ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES: VIOLENCE IN ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES WAS NOT TO BE LINKED TO OR DIRECTED FROM JORDAN: AND THERE MUST BE NO ATTACKS ON UNITED STATES TARGETS. ARAFAT HAD AGREED TO THESE CONDITIONS.
4. ON THE PEACE PROCESS, THE KING HAD INSISTED TO ARAFAT THAT PLO RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST AND ACCEPTANCE OF 242/338 WAS INDISPENSABLE. ARAFAT HAD REPLIED THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS ALSO URGING HIM TO MOVE FORWARD ON 242/338, THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE POSITION, BUT THAT HE NEEDED TIME TO CONSULT WITHIN THE ORGANISATION. ACCORDING TO KIRBY, QUOTING RIFAI, THE JORDANIANS DID NOT PRESS ARAFAT FOR A RESPONSE BY A PARTICULAR DATE.
5. KIRBY SAID THE UNITED STATES NOW EXPECTED A PERIOD OF STOCK-TAKING BY JORDAN: MURPHY'S VISIT (23-24 OCTOBER) HAD SHOWN THAT HUSSEIN WAS NOT YET READY TO MAKE ANY FIRM DECISIONS. AT SHULTZ'S REQUEST MURPHY HAD TRIED TO FOCUS HUSSEIN ON A SPECIFIC TIMETABLE, A SERIES OF TIMED STEPS LEADING OVER 6 WEEKS TO THE OPENING OF DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL AUSPICES (CF CAIRO TELNO 815). MURPHY HAD ARGUED TO THE KING THAT IF PERES HAD A FIRM DATE FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS, HE COULD MORE EASILY OVERCOME OPPOSITION WITHIN ISRAEL TO THOSE ELEMENTS IN THE PEACE PROCESS WHICH WERE IMPORTANT TO JORDAN (IE A MURPHY MEETING: PALESTINIAN DELEGATES WITH PLO ASSOCIATIONS: AND SOVIET INVOLVEMENT). THE KING HAD REPLIED THAT MORE ELEMENTS OF THE PROCESS WOULD HAVE TO BE TIED DOWN BEFORE HE COULD SET THE CLOCK TICKING BY AGREEING ON A FIRM DATE FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

/b. KIRBY.



# CONFIDENTIAL

6. KIRBY SAID THAT JORDANIAN AMBIGUITY (THE OVERTURES TO SYRIA, AS AGAINST THE HARD LINE TO THE PLO) APPEARED TO BE DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO UNSETTLE ARAFAT. BUT IT WAS ALSO BECOMING DIFFICULT FOR THE ADMINISTRATION TO DISTINGUISH THE KING'S TACTICS FROM HIS STRATEGY. THEY WERE NOT CONFIDENT AS TO WHICH WAY HE WOULD ACTUALLY GO.

## COMMENT

7. THE ADMINISTRATION'S ATTEMPT TO COMMIT KING HUSSEIN TO A TIMETABLE MAY WELL HAVE BEEN TIMED WITH THE US/SOVIET SUMMIT IN MIND. IN SENDING MURPHY THEY CLEARLY ALSO HOPED TO CATCH THE TIDE OF HUSSEIN'S DISSATISFACTION WITH ARAFAT AT FULL FLOOD. IN THIS THEY APPEAR TO HAVE UNDERESTIMATED THE KING'S NEED TO PROTECT HIMSELF, AND HIS COMMITMENT TO HIS STATED MINIMUM CONDITIONS. THEIR CONSIDERED ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE MURPHY VISIT IS MORE DOWNBEAT THAN THEIR FIRST REACTIONS (OUR TELNO 2965). THEIR CONFIDENCE THAT THE PEACE PROCESS SHOW IS STILL ON THE ROAD IS NOW SOMEWHAT MORE MUTED.

WRIGHT

MIDDLE EAST

LIMITED

NENAD  
MED  
NAD  
SOVIET D  
PLANNING STAFF  
UND  
ECD(E) (POCO UNIT)  
NEWS DEPT  
INFO DEPT  
PUSD  
SED  
SCD

PS  
PS/MR RENTON  
PS/PUS  
MR FERGUSSON  
MR DEREK THOMAS  
MR GOODALL  
MR EGERTON  
MR O'NEILL  
MR SAMUEL  
MR LONG

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
ARAB/ISRAEL

CONFIDENTIAL