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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/04/2007

TEXT
TAGS: PREL, AORC, PHUM, PGOV, KNAR, AR, CU, HA, PA
SUBJECT: A/S DAVIDOW'S MEETING WITH ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR
GUELAR, 11/04/97

REF: (A) BUENOS AIRES 5415, (B)STATE 206464

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY ARA A/S JEFFREY DAVIDOW. REASONS
1.5(B) AND (D).

SUMMARY

2. (C) ON NOVEMBER 4, ARA A/S DAVIDOW CALLED IN ARGENTINE
AMBASSADOR DIEGO GUELAR TO EXPRESS USG CONCERNS OVER GOA
PLANS TO ABSTAIN ON THE CUBA HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION AT THE
UNGA, INSTEAD OF SUPPORTING IT AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS.

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GUELAR RESPONDED THAT THE GOA CAN BE MORE EFFECTIVE ON CUBA IF IT IS NOT ISOLATED FROM ITS RIO GROUP PARTNERS. HE PROMISED TO REPORT USG VIEWS DIRECTLY TO PRESIDENT MENEM. A/S DAVIDOW AND GUELAR ALSO DISCUSSED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOA'S COMMITMENT TO TAKE A NUMBER OF PROTECTEES CURRENTLY HELD AT THE GUANTANAMO NAVAL BASE. A/S DAVIDOW RAISED THE USG REQUEST (FIRST MENTIONED DURING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO ARGENTINA) FOR AN ARGENTINE "SWAT TEAM" TO BE SENT TO HAITI TO PROTECT CIVILIAN POLICE, BUT NOTED THAT FURTHER ACTION SHOULD AWAIT CONVERSATIONS IN NEW YORK ON THIS TOPIC. GUELAR SOLICITED USG VIEWS ON **PARAGUAY**. HE URGED INITIATION OF A USG-MERCOSUR DIALOGUE, AND FLOATED THE IDEA OF A/S DAVIDOW INFORMALLY MEETING WITH MERCOSUR FOREIGN MINISTERS DURING THE ARGENTINE MERCOSUR PRESIDENCY WHICH BEGINS IN JANUARY. GUELAR SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT THE "NAZI GOLD" ISSUE WOULD NOT BECOME A SUBJECT OF PARTISAN DEBATE IN **ARGENTINA**. HE ALSO GAVE HIS ANALYSIS OF THE RECENT ARGENTINE CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

3. (C) PARTICIPANTS: GUELAR WAS ACCOMPANIED BY EMBASSY DCM SANTOS GONI AND POLOFF MARIA JULIA RODRIGUEZ. A/S DAVIDOW WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ARA/CCA DIRECTOR RANNEBERGER AND ARA/BSC DESKOFF SANDERS (NOTETAKER).

CUBA - UNGA RESOLUTION

4. (C) A/S DAVIDOW SAID THAT THE USG TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY THE UNGA RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CUBA. WE APPRECIATED THE GOA'S VOTE IN FAVOR DURING PREVIOUS YEARS AND HAD EVEN HOPED FOR ARGENTINE CO-SPONSORSHIP THIS YEAR. THUS WE WERE NOW VERY CONCERNED ABOUT REPORTS (REF A) THAT THE GOA INSTEAD WOULD ABSTAIN. THE EUROPEAN UNION IS CO-SPONSORING; ARGENTINA BELONGS WITH THE INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES FOR WHOM THIS IS AN ISSUE OF FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE.

5. (C) GUELAR RESPONDED THAT PRESIDENT MENEM HAD FACED PROBLEMS WITHIN THE RIO GROUP AS A RESULT OF HIS STRONG STATEMENTS REGARDING CUBA. GOA THINKING NOW WAS THAT IT DID NOT WANT TO BE ISOLATED FROM ITS RIO GROUP AND MERCOSUR PARTNERS. BETTER RESULTS COULD BE GOTTEN BY WORKING WITHIN THE RIO GROUP CONSENSUS. HE CITED THE APPROACH THE GOA WAS TAKING TO THE ISLA MARGARITA IBERO-AMERICA SUMMIT WHERE IT WILL WORK, TOGETHER WITH THE SPANISH, TO ACHIEVE A CONSENSUS TO HOLD CASTRO TO HIS PREVIOUS COMMITMENTS AND TO REQUIRE CONDITIONALITY (E.G. ACCESS TO THE MEDIA IN CUBA AND RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS) BEFORE ATTENDING THE NEXT SUMMIT PLANNED FOR HAVANA. HE STRESSED THAT THIS CONSENSUS-BASED APPROACH DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE GOA IS CHANGING ITS BASIC VIEWS ON CUBA. RATHER IT IS A WAY TO MAINTAIN DIALOGUE WITH OTHER RIO GROUP COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY BRAZIL. A/S DAVIDOW RESPONDED THAT ARGENTINA WOULD BE IN A BETTER POSITION STANDING ON PRINCIPLE ON SUCH A FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE AS HUMAN RIGHTS AND SHOULD NOT BE SO

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INTENT ON MERCOSUR AND RIO GROUP HARMONY. GUELAR PROMISED THAT A/S DAVIDOW'S DEMARCHE WOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO BUENOS AIRES. HE THEN SAID THAT HE HIMSELF WOULD UNDERTAKE TO CALL MENEM DIRECTLY TO UNDERScore THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THE USG ATTACHES TO THIS ISSUE.

CUBA - GUANTANAMO PROTECTEES

6. (C) A/S DAVIDOW EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE GOA'S WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A LIMITED NUMBER OF CUBAN MIGRANTS CURRENTLY IN PROTECTED STATUS AT THE GUANTANAMO NAVAL BASE. GUELAR REITERATED THE GOA COMMITMENT, SAYING THAT TO AVOID ANY DOMESTIC POLITICAL QUESTIONS, IT PREFERENCES TO TREAT THE CUBANS AS IMMIGRANTS RATHER THAN REFUGEES; THIS IS, IN FACT, A BETTER STATUS, AS IT WOULD GIVE THEM EASIER ACCESS TO EVENTUAL ARGENTINE CITIZENSHIP. ARA/CCA DIRECTOR RANNEBERGER SAID THAT THE USG IS WORKING ON CREATING A FINAL LIST OF 10 MIGRANTS IN 1997 AND 14 IN 1998 WHICH WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE GOA.

HAITI - ARGENTINE CIVPOL SWAT TEAM

7. (C) A/S DAVIDOW APPRISED GUELAR OF A DEMARCHE BEING MADE IN BUENOS AIRES (REF B) FOR THE GOA TO CONTRIBUTE A POLICE SELF-DEFENSE UNIT SWAT TEAM TO PROTECT UN CIVILIAN POLICE AFTER THE UN MILITARY PRESENCE ENDS ON NOVEMBER 30. HE NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY HAD RAISED THIS MATTER WITH MENEM AND DI TELLA DURING THEIR VISIT TO ARGENTINA. A/S DAVIDOW TOLD GUELAR THAT NO ACTION ON ARGENTINA'S PART SHOULD BE TAKEN ABSENT FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH THE UN. GUELAR SAID THAT HE RECALLED THAT THE MATTER HAD INDEED BEEN DISCUSSED DURING THE SUMMIT.

PARAGUAY

8. (C) GUELAR RAISED PARAGUAY, FIRST OBSERVING THAT WASMOSY HAD BEEN VERY ANGRY AT MENEM FOR RECEIVING OVIEDO. THIS WAS, HE ADMITTED, "NOT OUR BEST MOMENT," AND HE RECALLED THAT THE MFA HAD OPPOSED THE VISIT. THE PARAGUAYAN PROBLEM WENT BEYOND OVIEDO, HE ADDED. IN THE EVENT THAT LIBERAL LEADER DOMINGO LAINO WON, HE TOO WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR BOTH THE USG AND GOA TO WORK WITH. HE ASKED FOR USG VIEWS. A/S DAVIDOW RESPONDED THAT OUR POSITION REMAINED THE SAME. AT A MINIMUM DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES MUST BE RESPECTED AND ELECTIONS MUST NOT BE INTERRUPTED. THE USG, HE ADDED, WANTS TO WORK WITH ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, AND PARAGUAY TO ADDRESS THE TERRORISM AND LAW ENFORCEMENT THREATS ARISING IN THE TRI-BORDER AREA.

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U.S.-MERCOSUR DIALOGUE

9. (C) GUELAR OBSERVED THAT DURING THEIR VISIT TO ARGENTINA THE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY HAD INDICATED INTEREST IN PURSUING A POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIALOGUE WITH MERCOSUR. THE GOA, WHICH WILL ASSUME THE MERCOSUR PRESIDENCY FOR SIX MONTHS BEGINNING IN JANUARY, WANTS TO FOLLOW UP ON THIS. HE SAID HE WAS PROPOSING TO THE GOA THAT A/S DAVIDOW BE INVITED TO BUENOS AIRES IN JANUARY TO MEET WITH MERCOSUR FOREIGN MINISTERS FOR INFORMAL CONVERSATIONS. A/S DAVIDOW SAID THAT HE WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO ACCEPT SUCH AN INVITATION.

NAZI GOLD

10. (C) GUELAR RAISED THE NAZI GOLD ISSUE, EXPRESSING APPRECIATION FOR THE BRIEFING WHICH HIS EMBASSY WAS SCHEDULED TO RECEIVE SHORTLY REGARDING THE HISTORIAN'S FOLLOW-ON REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF NEUTRAL COUNTRIES INCLUDING ARGENTINA. HE SAID THAT GRACIELA FERNANDEZ MEIJIDE OF THE OPPOSITION FREPASO PARTY WOULD BE MEETING IN NEW YORK WITH OFFICIALS OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE LATER IN THE MONTH AND THAT HE EXPECTED THIS ISSUE AS WELL AS THE AMIA AND ISRAELI EMBASSY BOMBINGS WOULD COME UP; IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THEY NOT BECOME PARTISAN ISSUES WITHIN ARGENTINA. A/S DAVIDOW STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE AND SENSITIVITY OF THE NAZI GOLD ISSUE AND SAID THAT THE USG RECOGNIZED THE SERIOUSNESS WHICH THE GOA HAS SHOWN IN DEALING WITH IT THUS FAR.

ARGENTINE POLITICS

10. (C) GUELAR GAVE HIS ANALYSIS OF THE FREPASO-RADICAL ALLIANCE'S VICTORY IN THE OCTOBER 26 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS. AS A PERONIST HE WAS DISAPPOINTED AT THE RESULTS, THOUGH ON BALANCE HE THOUGHT THAT THEY WERE HEALTHY FOR THE COUNTRY. THE PERONISTS WOULD HAVE TO TRY HARDER TO GOVERN BETTER TO RECOUP THEIR LOST GROUND, WHILE THE ALLIANCE WOULD HAVE TO PROVE THAT IT IS A RESPONSIBLE OPPOSITION COOPERATING WITH MENEM WHERE NECESSARY FOR THE COUNTRY'S GOOD, AND THUS SHOWING TO THE PUBLIC THAT IT IS CAPABLE OF ASSUMING THE PRESIDENCY. HE PREDICTED THAT THE ALLIANCE WOULD STAY TOGETHER AND THAT GRACIELA FERNANDEZ MEIJIDE AND BUENOS AIRES MAYOR FERNANDO DE LA RUA OF THE RADICALS WOULD MAKE UP ITS TICKET IN 1999, BUT THAT IT WAS NOT CLEAR WHO WOULD HAVE THE TOP SPOT ON IT.
ALBRIGHT

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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