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1. THE FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED AND APPROVED BY THE BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AND CANADIAN AFFAIRS AND OTHER SELECTED BUREAUS HANDLING ISSUES OF INTEREST TO EUR POSTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING. QUESTIONS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO DAVID EVANS, EUR POLICY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

SERBIA: KOSOVO SITUATION UPDATE
SERBIA: KOSOVO U.S. POLICY
BOSNIA: NGOS AND U.S. EFFORTS IN BOSNIA
NORTHERN IRELAND: PEACE PROCESS
GREECE/TURKEY: MEETING OF MILITARY COMMANDERS
LATVIA: WESTERN EUROPEAN PRESSURE
LATVIA: ECONOMIC MEASURES AGAINST LATVIA
IRAQ: REJECTION OF UK CONFERENCE
ARGENTINA: NAZI WAR CRIMINAL
GERMANY: TERRORISM - LABELLE DISCO BOMBING TRIAL

2. SERBIA: KOSOVO SITUATION UPDATE

PROTESTS:

- OVER THE WEEKEND THERE WERE A NUMBER OF PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS HELD THROUGHOUT KOSOVO. AS MANY AS 50,000 PEOPLE GATHERED IN PRIZEN, 15,000 IN GJILAN, AND THOUSANDS OF OTHERS IN MOST EVERY CITY OF THE KOSOVO REGION.
- WHILE POLICE AND SPECIAL POLICE UNITS WERE REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN PRESENT AT THESE PROTESTS, NO INCIDENTS WERE NOTED.

MOVEMENT TOWARDS A DIALOGUE:

- THERE HAS BEEN NO PROGRESS REPORTED. MILOSEVIC HAS NOT YET TAKEN POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIALOGUE, THE OFFERS MADE BY BELGRADE STILL HAVE PRECONDITIONS ATTACHED AND MILOSEVIC HAS REJECTED ANY PARTICIPATION OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES.
- THERE HAS BEEN NO EVIDENCE OF WITHDRAWAL OF SPECIAL POLICE FORCES. IN FACT, THE EVIDENCE IS TO THE CONTRARY, WITH HEAVY EQUIPMENT STILL IN PLACE AND POLICE FORCES HARDENING POSITIONS.

3. SERBIA: KOSOVO U.S. POLICY

Q: WHAT DOES THE U.S. FAVOR AS A SOLUTION TO THE KOSOVO CRISIS?

A: -- THE UNITED STATES, ALONG WITH THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE CONTACT GROUP PARTNERS, HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE CRISIS IN KOSOVO WOULD BE BEST RESOLVED BY AN OFFER FROM THE AUTHORITIES IN BELGRADE TO THE KOSOVAR ALBANIAN COMMUNITY OF A GENUINE POLITICAL PROCESS. THIS

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SHOULD BE ACHIEVED THROUGH AN UNCONDITIONAL DIALOGUE THAT WOULD INCLUDE PARTICIPATION OF AN OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVE.

(ONLY IF ASKED)

Q: WILL TALBOTT AND GELBARD BE TRAVELLING TO EUROPE? WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THEIR TRIP?

A: -- MILOSEVIC'S LACK OF PROGRESS AND INSISTENCE ON STAGING A DELAYING REFERENDUM HAS FORCED US TO SERIOUSLY

CONSIDER THE NEXT STEPS WE WOULD TAKE IF BELGRADE REMAINS DEFIANT.

-- AS PART OF THIS PROCESS, DEPUTY SECRETARY TALBOTT AND SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE GELBARD WILL BE TRAVELING TO THE CONTACT GROUP CAPITALS TO DISCUSS OPTIONS.

-- HOWEVER, IT IS CLEAR THE BEST OPTION WOULD BE FOR MILOSEVIC TO TAKE SERIOUSLY THE DEMANDS OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND THE CONTACT GROUP.

4. BOSNIA: NGOS AND U.S. EFFORTS IN BOSNIA

Q: DOES THE U.S. THINK NGOS SHOULD BE PHASED OUT, WITH THEIR TASKS TAKEN OVER BY LOCALS?

A: -- DURING THE WAR, NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS DID HEROIC WORK IN BOSNIA. NOW, DURING THE DAYTON IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS, THEY PLAY AN INSTRUMENTAL ROLE IN FORGING A LASTING PEACE. THE U.S. FULLY SUPPORTS THESE EFFORTS, SINCE THERE CONTINUES TO BE A NEED FOR THEM.

-- THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS COME TO DEPEND UPON THEIR DEDICATION IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS. THE U.S. AND MANY OTHER DONORS CHANNEL MUCH ASSISTANCE THROUGH NGOS AS THE QUICKEST AND MOST EFFICIENT WAY OF HELPING THE PEOPLE OF BOSNIA.

-- AS BOSNIA GROWS ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY STRONGER, WE WOULD OF COURSE EXPECT THE COUNTRY ITSELF TO TAKE OVER MANY OF THE FUNCTIONS CURRENTLY BEING DONE BY THE NGOS.

-- THERE ALSO NEED TO BE DOMESTIC, INDIGENOUS NGOS WHICH CAN PROVIDE NEEDED SERVICES. THROUGH THE SUPPORT FOR THE EAST EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY ACT, WE ARE ACTIVELY SUPPORTING THE CREATION AND GROWTH OF SUCH NGOS ALONG WITH OTHER DONORS.

-- THAT IS THE DIRECTION WHERE WE ARE HEADED, AND WE ARE MAKING REAL PROGRESS. WHEN BOSNIA REACHES A POINT WHERE THE SERVICES OF EXPATRIATE NGOS ARE NO LONGER NEEDED, IT WILL BE SELF-EVIDENT.

5. NORTHERN IRELAND: PEACE PROCESS

Q: ANY UPDATE ON DETAILS OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT?

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A: -- THE DETAILS OF THIS 67-PAGE AGREEMENT ARE NOW PUBLIC. I WOULD REFER YOU TO THE BRITISH OR IRISH EMBASSIES FOR COPIES OF THE TEXT.

Q: ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE VIOLENCE BY THOSE WHO OPPOSE THE AGREEMENT?

A: -- FRINGE ELEMENTS THAT HAVE REJECTED THIS PEACE PROCESS FROM THE START MIGHT TRY TO PROVOKE VIOLENT INCIDENTS TO DERAILED IT. PARTICIPANTS IN THE TALKS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN KEENLY AWARE OF THIS DANGER AND ARE PREPARED TO WORK TO PREVENT IT FROM DIMINISHING THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE.

Q: WILL THE USG BE INVOLVED IN PROMOTING SUPPORT FOR THE AGREEMENT?

A: -- AS BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE MADE CLEAR IN THEIR STATEMENTS ON FRIDAY, WE WILL CONTINUE OUR LONGSTANDING EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF THOSE TRYING TO MAKE PEACE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. WE STAND READY TO HELP IN ANY WAY IN THE COMING WEEKS AND MONTHS.

6. GREECE/TURKEY: MEETING OF MILITARY COMMANDERS

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. VIEW OF THE MEETING BETWEEN THE GREEK AND TURKISH MILITARY CHIEFS APRIL 6?

A: -- WE UNDERSTAND GENERAL TSOGANIS AND GENERAL KARADAYL HAD A USEFUL AND CORDIAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, WHICH WE VIEW AS A WELCOME DEVELOPMENT FOR OUR GREEK AND TURKISH ALLIES AND INDEED FOR THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE.

Q: DID THIS MEETING CONSTITUTE THE OPENING OF A "DIALOGUE?"

A: -- WE ENCOURAGE GREEKS AND TURKS FROM ALL SECTORS, GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE, TO DISCUSS MEANS OF REDUCING TENSION AND WORKING TOWARD PEACE AND COOPERATION IN THE REGION. GENERAL TSOGANIS AND GENERAL KARADAYL MET PREVIOUSLY IN MARCH AND SEPTEMBER.

7. LATVIA -- WESTERN EUROPEAN PRESSURE

Q: WHAT IS YOUR REACTION TO THE APRIL 13 WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL ON PRESSURE PUT ON LATVIA BY SEVERAL WESTERN LEADERS IN RESPONSE TO RUSSIAN PRESSURE ON LATVIA TO ALTER ITS TREATMENT OF ITS LARGE NONCITIZEN POPULATION?

A: -- AS WE HAVE SAID IN THE PAST, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ANY SYSTEMATIC PATTERN OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN LATVIA.

-- LATVIA HAS BEEN MAKING PROGRESS TOWARD FULFILLING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OSCE, AND WE EXPECT THAT

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PROGRESS WILL CONTINUE.

-- WE CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE LATVIA TO IMPLEMENT OSCE RECOMMENDATIONS AND TO ENSURE THAT IN DRAFTING AND IMPLEMENTING ITS LEGISLATION IT COMPLIES WITH EUROPEAN HUMAN RIGHTS STANDARDS AND ITS INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS.

-- WE STAND READY TO ASSIST LATVIA AS IT WORKS ON THESE IMPORTANT ISSUES. WE BELIEVE THAT POSITIVE ENGAGEMENT OFFERS THE BEST PROSPECTS OF PRODUCING THE DESIRED RESULTS.

8. RUSSIA-LATVIA: ECONOMIC MEASURES AGAINST LATVIA

Q: WHAT IS THE US POSITION REGARDING RUSSIA'S PUBLIC CALL FOR ECONOMIC MEASURES TO BE TAKEN AGAINST LATVIA?

A: -- WE BELIEVE THAT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LATVIA AND RUSSIA SHOULD BE ADDRESSED BILATERALLY AND WITH THE HELP OF THE OSCE MISSION IN LATVIA, AND THAT THE USE OF ECONOMIC SANCTIONS WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.

-- THE FUNDAMENTAL LONG TERM INTERESTS OF RUSSIA AND LATVIA ARE BEST SERVED BY IMPROVED RELATIONS.

-- THE PRINCIPLES OF PROMOTING GOOD RUSSIAN-LATVIAN RELATIONS AND IMPROVING THE SITUATION OF ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN ALL BALTIC STATES ARE PROMINENTLY REAFFIRMED IN THE U.S.-BALTIC CHARTER OF FRIENDSHIP.

-- WE URGE RUSSIA AND LATVIA TO RENEW A DIRECT DIALOGUE TO DEAL WITH THE BROAD RANGE OF BILATERAL ISSUES

9. IRAQ: REJECTION OF UK CONFERENCE

Q: WHAT'S YOUR VIEW OF THE IRAQI PARLIAMENT'S REJECTION OF THE UK CONFERENCE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OIL FOR FOOD PROGRAM?

-- WE ARE NOT SURPRISED AT THIS LATEST EVIDENCE OF THE IRAQI REGIME'S TOTAL LACK OF INTEREST IN THE WELL BEING OF THE IRAQI PEOPLE.

-- WE WOULD LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT THE IRAQI REGIME HAS YET TO ACCEPT THE EXPANDED HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CALLED FOR BY UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1153. THEREFORE, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS RIGHTLY CONCERNED THAT IMPLEMENTATION NOT BE UNDULY DELAYED BY THE REGIME'S CONTINUING RECALCITRANCE.

-- IN OUR VIEW, THE UK CONFERENCE IS DESIGNED TO DO ONE THING AND ONE THING ONLY: DISCUSS ARRANGEMENTS TO MAKE MORE EFFICIENT THE DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD, MEDICINE AND OTHER HUMANITARIAN GOODS FOR THE BENEFIT OF IRAQIS.

- FOR DETAILS ON THE CONFERENCE, YOU SHOULD CHECK WITH

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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

10. ARGENTINA: NAZI WAR CRIMINAL

Q: WHAT IS SAKIC ACCUSED OF?

A: -- SAKIC (SHAH-KICH) IS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE CAMP COMMANDERS AT THE JASENOVAC (YAH-SIN-OH-VATS) CONCENTRATION CAMP IN WHAT IS NOW CROATIA. IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED THAT BETWEEN 80,000 AND 600,000 PEOPLE WERE KILLED THERE. MOST OF THEM WERE SERBS, JEWS, AND ROMA (GYPSIES). NO MATTER WHAT THE EXACT NUMBER, CLEARLY THIS IS A HORRIFIC CRIME. THE FACTS SURROUNDING SAKIC'S ROLE AT JASENOVAC ARE SERIOUS AND DESERVE TO BE PROVED IN COURT.

Q: WHAT IS THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT DOING? THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT HAS ASKED A FEDERAL JUDGE TO ORDER THAT SAKIC BE DETAINED FOR QUESTIONING.

WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS REQUEST IS BEING CONSIDERED BY JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES.

A: -- WE HAVE SEEN PRESS REPORTS INDICATING THAT SAKICH IS STILL IN ARGENTINA AND HIS WHEREABOUTS ARE KNOWN TO THE POLICE.

-- WE APPLAUD THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE ARGENTINE-GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO BE TAKING THIS MATTER AND URGE IT TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY STEPS TO ASSURE THAT SAKIC IS BROUGHT TO JUSTICE.

Q: WHAT ABOUT REPORTS THAT CROATIA WOULD TRY HIM?

A: -- WE WELCOME REPORTS THAT CROATIA WILL REQUEST HIS EXTRADITION. WE LOOK FORWARD TO A VIGOROUS PROSECUTION AND A FAIR TRIAL IN A COURT OF LAW.

Q: COULD HE BE TRIED AT THE YUGOSLAVIA WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL IN THE HAGUE?

A: -- NO. THE YUGOSLAVIA WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL CAN PROSECUTE CRIMES THAT TOOK PLACE AFTER JANUARY 1, 1991.

11. GERMANY: TERRORISM - LABELLE DISCO BOMBING TRIAL

Q: HAS LIBYA AGREED TO GERMANY QUESTIONING AGENTS IN THE LA BELLE DISCO BOMBING CASE? IS THE USG WORKING WITH GERMANY IN THE INVESTIGATION?

A: -- WE HAVE SEEN THE PRESS REPORT THAT CONTAINS THIS UNATTRIBUTED ALLEGATION. WE HAVE CLOSELY FOLLOWED THIS CASE, INCLUDING THE TRIAL THAT IS STILL UNDERWAY IN BERLIN, AND WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE REPORTED ALLEGATION.

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ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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Page 7