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CITE [redacted]

DIST 19 MARCH 1977

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COUNTRY: PANAMA/CUBA/USSR

DOI : [redacted]

SUBJECT: REQUEST BY GENERAL OMAR TORRIJOS FOR CUBAN AND SOVIET FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR PANAMANIAN SUGAR INDUSTRY; INVITATION FOR CUBAN PREMIER FIDEL CASTRO TO VISIT PANAMA; TORRIJOS INTEREST IN VISITING SOVIET UNION

ACQ : [redacted]

SOURCE : [redacted]

1. SHORTLY BEFORE DEPARTING PANAMA FOR CUBA ON 16 MARCH 1977, MOISES "MONCHI" TORRIJOS HERRERA, PANAMANIAN AMBASSADOR TO SPAIN AND BROTHER OF CHIEF OF

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GOVERNMENT GENERAL OMAR T O R R I J O S HERRERA, SAID HE WAS HAND-CARRYING A LETTER FROM GENERAL TORRIJOS TO CUBAN PREMIER FIDEL C A S T R O R U Z INVITING CASTRO TO VISIT PANAMA IN LATE MAY OR EARLY JUNE 1977. MOISES TORRIJOS SAID GENERAL TORRIJOS INSTRUCTED HIM TO ASSURE CASTRO THAT CASTRO'S VISIT TO PANAMA WOULD NOT COMPLICATE PANAMA'S CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. IF CASTRO ACCEPTS THE INVITATION, MOISES TORRIJOS PLANS TO RETURN TO CUBA FROM SPAIN TO ACCOMPANY CASTRO TO PANAMA.

2. MOISES TORRIJOS SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT TO CUBA HE WOULD DISCUSS WITH CASTRO THE POSSIBILITY OF CUBA PROVIDING PANAMA WITH TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR ITS SUGAR INDUSTRY. GENERAL TORRIJOS ALSO ASKS THAT CASTRO ASSIST IN CLEARING THE WAY FOR MARKETING PANAMANIAN SUGAR AND RICE TO THE SOVIET BLOC COUNTRIES. PANAMA WOULD LIKE TO ESTABLISH SOME ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY PANAMA COULD REPAY CUBA FOR ITS TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THROUGH SALES OF SUGAR AND RICE TO THE SOVIET BLOC.

3. IN ADDITION, MOISES TORRIJOS HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO ASK CASTRO TO BROACH WITH THE SOVIET UNION THE POSSIBILITY OF

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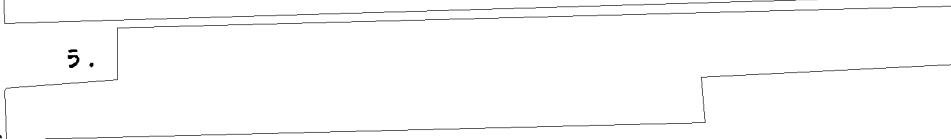
GENERAL TORRIJOS VISITING THE SOVIET UNION IN LATE 1977 TO DISCUSS A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THEIR TWO COUNTRIES.

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5.



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