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E. O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, US, UR, AF, PK, PARM

SUBJECT: SHEVARDNADZE LETTER ON AFGHANISTAN, APRIL 9

1. (S-ENTIRE TEXT)

SUMMARY

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2. AMBASSADOR MET WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ALEKSANDR BESSMERTNYKH AT THE LATTER'S REQUEST ON APRIL 9 TO RECEIVE TEXT OF SHEVARDNADZE LETTER TO SECRETARY SHULTZ ON AFGHANISTAN. (EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF TEXT FOLLOWS PARA 6 BELOW.) BESSMERTNYKH ALSO SUGGESTED THAT SHEVARDNADZE HOPED TO MEET WITH THE SECRETARY AT GENEVA TO DISCUSS THE AGENDA OF NST QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED AT THE MOSCOW MINISTERIAL

END SUMMARY

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3. AMBASSADOR MET WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ALEKSAMDR BESSMERTNYKH AT THE LATTER'S REQUEST ON APRIL 9 TO RECEIVE TEXT OF SHEVARDNADZB LETTER TO

DECLASSIFIED
NLS F90-031/2 #66

BY MR, NARA, DATE 3/26/99

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SECRETARY SHULTZ ON AFGHANISTAN. TAKING NOTE OF THE SECRETARY'S MARCH 30 LETTER AND THE ORAL MESSAGE PASSED BY THE AMBASSADOR ON APRIL 8, BESSMERTNYKH SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THE U. S. WOULD FIND THE LETTER TO SECRETARY SHULTZ SATISFACTORY. HE ADDED THAT HE WANTED TO HIGHLIGHT THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF THE LETTER WHICH NOTED THAT THE SOVIET UNION WOULD CONDUCT ITSELF ON THE BASIS OF THE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING REACHED DURING THE MARCH MINISTERIAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON.

4. BESSMERTNYKH READ FROM THE TEXT, NOTING THAT:

-- THE SIGNING IN GENEVA WOULD MARK THE END OF ONE PROCESS AND THE BEGINNING OF ANOTHER;

-- THE WASHINGTON TALKS HAD HELPED WORK OUT THIS AGREEMENT;

-- THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF AFGHANISTAN COULD SERVE AS POSITIVE EXAMPLE FOR THE RESOLUTION OF OTHER REGIONAL CONFLICTS.

5. BESSMERTNYKH SAID THAT, AS HE UNDERSTOOD IT, ALL PARTIES WOULD BE FREE TO MAKE STATEMENTS AT THE TIME OF THE SIGNING. HE ASKED HOW THE U. S. WOULD CHARACTERIZE THE AGREEMENT. THE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT HAVE ANY INSTRUCTIONS ON THIS POINT, HE ASSUMED THE U. S. WOULD SAY THAT OUR UNDERSTANDING WAS ALONG THE LINES INDICATED IN THE SECRETARY'S LETTER AND THE ORAL MESSAGE PASSED TO BESSMERTNYKH ON APRIL 8.

6. FOLLOWING IS EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF TEXT OF SHEVARDNADZE'S LETTER:

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DEAR MR. SECRETARY:

-- IN RESPONSE TO YOUR LETTER OF MARCH 31, WHICH WAS CONSIDERED POSITIVELY, I WANT TO NOTE WITH SATISFACTION THAT THE LONG AND QUITE COMPLEX NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SITUATION AROUND AFGHANISTAN HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED, AND THAT THE CORRESPONDING MUTALLY ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENTS HAVE BECOME, AT LAST, AN ACCOMPLISHED FACT. OBVIOUSLY, IT IS NOT AN OVERSTATEMENT TO SAY THAT EFFORTS OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES FACILITATED THIS GOAL IN A CERTAIN MEASURE.

-- NOW, THAT IN GENEVA IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO AGREE ON THE LAST UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS, AND AFTER WE HAVE CONDUCTED THE NECESSARY CONSULTATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN, WE CAN AFFIRM WITH YOU OUR MUTUAL READINESS TO BECOME GUARANTORS OF THE AGREEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN WORKED OUT, AND SIGN THE CORRESPONDING DOCUMENTS. IT SEEMS TO US THAT WE COULD DO THIS ON APRIL 14 IN GENEVA. IN THIS CASE, AS IS NOTED IN THE JOINT SOVIET-AFGHAN STATEMENT, THE UNDERSTANDING THAT SOVIET FORCES WILL BE WITHDRAWN IN THE PERIOD ESTABLISHED BY THE GENEVA AGREEMENTS BEGINNING ON MAY 15 WILL REMAIN IN FORCE.

-- I THINK YOU WILL AGREE THAT SIGNING THE AGREEMENTS IS, WHILE VERY IMPORTANT, ONLY JUST A BEGINNING. NOW IT IS NECESSARY TO BEGIM THEIR REALIZATION. THE SOVIET UNION INTENDS TO STRICTLY ADHERE TO THE OBLIGATIONS, WHICH ARE CLEARLY

FORMULATED IN THE COMPLETED DOCUMENTS, AND EXPECTS THE SAME FROM THE AMERICAN SIDE. THAT IS TO ACT IN THE MANNER SET OUT IN THE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

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ACHIEVED BY US IN WASHINGTON. THE CONSTRUCTIVE
MUTUAL ACTIONS OF OUR TWO COUNTRIES IN THIS QUESTION
WOULD SERVE AS A GOOD AND HOPEFUL EXAMPLE FOR THE
SETTLEMENT OF OTHER REGIONAL CONFLICTS.
WITH RESPECT,

E. SHEVARDNADZE

END TEXT.

7. BESSMERTNYKH NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS UNDERSTOOD
THE SECRETARY WAS PREPARED TO TRAVEL TO GENEVA TO
SIGN THE GUARANTEES INSTRUMENT AND AGREEMENT HAD BEEN
REACHED ON AN APRIL 14 DATE FOR SIGNATURE. THE
FOREIGN MINISTER HOPED THAT HE WOULD BE ABLE TO HAVE
A SEPARATE MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY TO DISCUSS THE
MOSCOW MINISTERIAL. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, AND NOTING
THAT THE MINISTER MIGHT HAVE OTHER IDEAS AS WELL,
BESSMERTNYKH SAID HE BELIEVED FIVE QUESTIONS RELATED
TO NST SHOULD BE DISCUSSED:

- PRINCIPLES OF AGREEMENT IN THE ABM AREA;
- SEA-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES INCLUDING THE COMPLEX
OF VERIFICATION MEASURES REGARDING SUCH SYSTEMS;
- AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES, WHICH HE SAID POSED
"STILL QUITE A LOT OF TROUBLE;"
- SUBLIMITS;
- VERIFICATION AND DATA EXCHANGE.

8. AMBASSADOR RAISED QUESTION OF MOBILE ICBMS.
BESSMERTNYKH AGREED MOBILES WERE A PROBLEM, BUT THIS
QUESTIONS WAS MORE EASILY RESOLVED THAN THE FIVE
ISSUES HE HAD ENUMERATED. THE PROBLEMS HE HAD LISTED

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WOULD REQUIRE MORE EFFORT. AMBASSADOR SAID HE WAS NOT SURE THAT MOBILE ICBMS WOULD BE AN EASY ISSUE TO RESOLVE. BESSMERTNYKH SAID THAT THE MINISTERS SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY GET INTO THE SUBSTANCE OF THESE QUESTION, BUT RATHER SET OUT THOSE AREAS WHICH WOULD REQUIRE SPECIAL ATTENTION BETWEEN NOW AND THE MINISTERIAL. THIS WOULD PREVENT THE TWO SIDES FROM PREPARING TWO DIFFERENT AGENDAS. AMBASSADOR UNDERTOOK TO REPORT SHEVARDNADZE'S DESIRE FOR A SEPARATE MEETING AND BESSMERTNYKH'S COMMENTS TO WASHINGTON.

9. BESSMERTNYKH NOTED THAT SHEVARDNADZE WOULD ARRIVE IN GENEVA ON THE EVENING OF WEDNESDAY APRIL 13 AND WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THESE ISSUES, AS WELL AS ATTEND THE SIGNING CEREMONY, ON APRIL 14.

10. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO PASS ISLAMABAD, KABUL, USMISSION GENEVA FOR PECK AND USDEL NST.

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