

Item Subject: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL: NEXT STEPS ON NATO

RELEASE IN FULL

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DECLASSIFIED

SUBJECT: OFFICIAL-INFORMAL: NEXT STEPS ON NATO  
EXPANSION AND THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT

REF: MOSCOW 35186

*Russia*

Declassification Authority: Geoffrey W. Chapman, Senior Reviewer, A/GIS/IPS 8/6/2020

1. ~~SECRET~~ ENTIRE TEXT.

2. TO FOLLOW UP OUR PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE YELTSIN/KOZYREV PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON NATO EXPANSION (REFTEL), I'D LIKE TO OFFER A FEW THOUGHTS ON HOW BEST TO HANDLE THE RUN-UP TO THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT HERE. AS MAMEDOV AGREED IN OUR CONVERSATION TODAY, THE VP'S MEETING WITH YELTSIN OFFERS US OUR BEST NEAR-TERM OPPORTUNITY TO GET DISCUSSION OF NATO EXPANSION WITH RUSSIA BACK ON A WORKABLE TRACK.

3. I WOULD RECOMMEND, FIRST, THAT THE PRESIDENT SEND A LETTER TO YELTSIN THIS COMING WEEKEND, SEVERAL DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE VP'S ARRIVAL. THIS MESSAGE WOULD RESPOND TO THE YELTSIN LETTER OF DECEMBER 3, AND OFFER WHATEVER CLARIFICATION OF OUR THINKING ON NATO EXPANSION THAT WE CAN PROVIDE (PERHAPS DRAWING ON THE IDEAS OFFERED AT THE END OF REFTEL). IT SEEMS TO ME TO BE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO LEAN AS FAR FORWARD AS WE CAN IN REASSURING YELTSIN THAT WE ENVISAGE NO ACTUAL DECISIONS ON NEW MEMBERS BEFORE JUNE OF 1996, AND NO FORMAL ENTRY OF NEW MEMBERS UNTIL CONSIDERABLY AFTER THAT. THE MESSAGE MIGHT ALSO UNDERSCORE THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED THE VP TO FOLLOW UP AND HAVE A CANDID CONVERSATION WITH YELTSIN.

4. IT MIGHT THEN MAKE SENSE -- AT THE RISK OF FURTHER DEVALUING THE CURRENCY OF PRESIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENCE -- TO ARM THE VP WITH A SECOND, MUCH SHORTER NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT TO YELTSIN, WHICH THE VP COULD DELIVER TO CHERNOMYRDIN AT THEIR FIRST ONE ON ONE ON DECEMBER 14 (IN PART TO GIVE YELTSIN A CHANCE TO DIGEST IT BEFORE HE AND THE VP MEET ON DECEMBER 16). THIS SECOND NOTE COULD SUGGEST THAT, ASSUMING THAT THE FIRST LETTER AND THE VP'S MEETING HAVE HELPED CLARIFY OUR POSITION FOR THE RUSSIANS, IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YELTSIN TO REAFFIRM PUBLICLY WHAT HE INDICATED IN HIS DECEMBER 3 LETTER -- THAT RUSSIA IS NOW PREPARED TO SIGN THE IPP AND RUSSIA-NATO DOCUMENTS. WE COULD ALSO BOTH PUT PUBLIC EMPHASIS ON THE CONTINUING DURABILITY OF OUR PARTNERSHIP FOLLOWING OUR RECENT CONTACTS, PRESIDENTIAL EXCHANGES, AND THE VP'S VISIT.

5. MAMEDOV LIKES THIS APPROACH AND CONTRIBUTED TO IT, AND THINKS THERE'S AT LEAST A FAIR CHANCE IT COULD PRODUCE A POSITIVE PUBLIC OUTCOME FOR THE VP. HE ASKS ONLY THAT WE INCLUDE IN THE FIRST LETTER A REFERENCE TO THE YELTSIN PROPOSAL FOR A JANUARY MOSCOW MEETING WITH KOHL AND CLINTON -- FOR WHICH MAMEDOV SAID NEITHER HE NOR KOZYREV WAS RESPONSIBLE. (MAMEDOV

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SUSPECTS THE IDEA MAY HAVE COME FROM BNY HIMSELF.)  
MAMEDOV BELIEVES YELTSIN WILL UNDERSTAND IF THE  
PRESIDENT SIMPLY EXPLAINS THAT THE PRESS OF BUSINESS  
IN WASHINGTON RULES OUT A JANUARY MEETING, AND  
EMPHASIZES THE VP'S ROLE AS HIS PERSONAL ENVOY.

6. MAMEDOV ADDED THAT HE PERSONALLY FAVORS THE IDEA  
OF A FORMAL TREATY OR AGREEMENT BETWEEN NATO AND  
RUSSIA, AS A FOLLOW-ON TO THE UNDERSTANDINGS WHICH  
HAVE ALREADY BEEN REACHED (AND WHICH HOPEFULLY WILL  
SOON BE SIGNED). THE MAIN PURPOSE WOULD BE TO STATE  
FORMALLY THAT NATO DOES NOT REGARD RUSSIA AS AN ENEMY.  
MAMEDOV SUGGESTED THAT THIS IS BEGINNING TO REFLECT  
KOZYREV'S THINKING AS WELL, BASED ON A LONG, PRIVATE  
CONVERSATION HE SAID HE HAD WITH THE MINISTER LAST  
SUNDAY PRIOR TO YELTSIN'S DEPARTURE FOR BUDAPEST.

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