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## AFGHANISTAN: CORDOVEZ SHUTTLE

## SUMMARY

1. CORDOVEZ LEAVES FOR GENEVA ON 9 FEBRUARY. ANNOUNCES NEXT ROUND IN GENEVA ON 2 MARCH. BELIEVES GENEVA TEXTS CAN NOW BE AGREED, THAT THEY SHOULD BE SIGNED BY A DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT FROM THE PRESENT KABUL REGIME, AND THAT THERE IS STILL MUCH WORK TO DO ON AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

## DETAIL

2. CORDOVEZ LEFT FOR GENEVA TODAY 9 FEBRUARY. AFTER HIS PRESS CONFERENCE HE HAD FINAL MEETINGS WITH ZIA AND THE PRIME MINISTER. HE TOLD ME BEFORE DEPARTURE THAT HE WOULD SPEND ONE DAY IN GENEVA WHERE HE WOULD CHOOSE THE HEAD OF THE UN MONITORING FORCE FOR AFGHANISTAN AND WOULD THEN GO ON TO NEW YORK, WHERE HE WOULD GIVE BIRCH AN ACCOUNT OF HIS SHUTTLE. HE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT EVERYTHING WAS VIRTUALLY WRAPPED UP ON THE GENEVA TEXTS BUT THAT THERE WAS STILL MUCH TO BE DONE ON THE SECOND TRACK NEGOTIATIONS DESIGNED TO PRODUCE AGREEMENT ON A FUTURE GOVERNMENT. ALL CONCERNED WOULD HAVE TO MOVE QUICKLY.

3. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE CORDOVEZ ANNOUNCED THAT HE WOULD CONVENE THE NEXT ROUND OF TALKS IN GENEVA ON 2 MARCH. THERE WAS AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON TIMEFRAME AND ON FRONT-LOADING OF WITHDRAWAL. THERE WAS NO FORMAL LINK BETWEEN THE GENEVA TEXTS AND FORMATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. ASKED ABOUT SIGNATURE, CORDOVEZ WAS VAGUE BUT SUGGESTED THAT ONCE AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON THE GENEVA TEXTS MUTUAL TRUST BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND SOVIET UNION WOULD INCREASE TO THE POINT WHERE THEY WOULD BOTH PUT PRESSURE ON THEIR RESPECTIVE AFGHAN CLIENTS TO REACH AGREEMENT ON A GOVERNMENT WHICH MIGHT THEN BE ABLE TO SIGN THE GENEVA AGREEMENT.

4. IN A PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH CROOKE EARLY ON 9 FEBRUARY PICCO CONFIRMED THAT NAJIB HAD ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLE OF FRONT-LOADING FOR WITHDRAWAL IN THE TERMS USED BY GORBACHEV (MOSCOW TELNO 241). NAJIB

HAD ALSO SAID THAT HE WOULD ACCEPT A 10-MONTH WITHDRAWAL PERIOD. IN RESPONSE CORDOVEZ HAD TOLD NAJIB THAT IF HE ANNOUNCED PUBLICLY THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT 10 MONTHS HE WOULD HAVE TO COME TO GENEVA PREPARED TO SETTLE FOR A SHORTER PERIOD. PICCO WAS CONCERNED THAT THIS WOULD INDEED PROVE TO BE THE CASE AND THAT THIS WOULD PUT EVEN GREATER PRESSURE ON PAKISTAN TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WITH NAJIB. A FULLER ACCOUNT OF THIS DISCUSSION FOLLOWS BY SEPARATE TELEGRAM.

5. CORDOVEZ TOLD THE US AMBASSADOR AT DINNER LAST NIGHT THAT HE CONSIDERED HE HAD DONE HIS JOB: IT WAS NOW UP TO THE AFGHANS. HE AGREED THAT THE AGREEMENTS SHOULD BE SIGNED BY A DIFFERENT GOVERNMENT FROM THAT OF THE PRESENT KABUL REGIME. ALL PARTIES WERE NOW AGREED THAT THEY WOULD BE BETTER OFF WITH A BROADLY BASED GOVERNMENT.

6. CORDOVEZ WAS IN EUPHORIC MOOD, ACCORDING TO RAPHEL. HIS ONLY CONCERN WAS WHETHER THE PAKISTANIS WOULD NOW DELIVER THE MUJAHIDEEN, WHICH WOULD PROBABLY MEAN BREAKING CHINA. CORDOVEZ WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP IN THE FORMATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT, BUT HE WOULD NOT PROVIDE A COVER FOR PAKISTANI DELAYING TACTICS.

7. IT IS OF INTEREST THAT A NUMBER OF PAKISTANI PUBLIC FIGURES INCLUDING THE LEADER OF THE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION GROUP AND EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION POLITICIANS ISSUED A STATEMENT ON 8 FEBRUARY URGING THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT TO REACH AN AGREEMENT AT THE NEXT ROUND IN GENEVA SINCE THE HOSTILITIES IN AFGHANISTAN THREATENED TO SHIFT THE CIVIL WAR FROM AFGHAN TERRITORY TO PAKISTAN. THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOW ABANDON ITS TACTIC OF PROCRASTINATION AND TAKE POSITIVE STEPS TO SECURE A SETTLEMENT.

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