

ADVANCE COPY

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CONFIDENTIAL  
FM ISLAMABAD  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELNO 392  
OF 141056Z MARCH 88  
INFO IMMEDIATE KABUL, MOSCOW, UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON  
INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS GENEVA, PARIS, BONN, NEW DELHI

## AFGHANISTAN

## SUMMARY

1. FLUID SITUATION IN ISLAMABAD AS DECISION ON GENEVA SIGNATURE APPROACHES. PRIME MINISTER WHO HAS CONSULTED WIDELY, LIKELY TO OPT FOR SIGNATURE. PRESIDENT MORE RELUCTANT, BUT WOULD PROBABLY GO ALONG IF SOME CONCESSION ON SOVIET SUPPLY TO KABUL AND HINTS THAT INTERIM GOVERNMENT MAY BE POSSIBLE. PAKISTAN PRESSURE ON ALLIANCES TO ADOPT REASONABLE POLITICAL ATTITUDES CAUSING GREAT TENSIONS LEADING TO KHALES' RESIGNATION. LITTLE LIKELY TO BE SETTLED BEFORE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO THE US.

## DETAIL -

2. ALTHOUGH THE MOMENT IS FAST APPROACHING WHEN THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO SIGN THE GENEVA ACCORDS, OR AT LEAST WHETHER OR NOT TO SIGN THEM BY THE MOSCOW ANNOUNCED DEADLINE OF 15 MARCH, TO DESCRIBE THE SITUATION IN ISLAMABAD AS FLUID WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN A THOROUGH AND GENUINE ROUND OF CONSULTATIONS IN THE COUNTRY. AFTER TALKING TO ASSEMBLY MEMBERS AND OPPOSITION LEADERS IN ISLAMABAD HE HAS JUST COMPLETED A TOUR OF THE FOUR PROVINCIAL CAPITALS WHERE HE HAS ADDRESSED GROUPS OF POLITICIANS, OFFICIALS, ACADEMICS, ETC. BY ALL ACCOUNTS HE HAS PRESENTED THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE GOVERNMENT IN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO SIGN AT GENEVA OBJECTIVELY, AND HAS EARNED CREDIT FOR SO DOING. THOUGH HE RARELY PRAISES THE PRIME MINISTER, PRESIDENT ZIA, IN A RECENT PRESS INTERVIEW IN DUBAI, GAVE JUNEJO CREDIT FOR THE WAY HE HAD HANDLED CONSULTATIONS WITH POLITICAL.

4. LAST NIGHT JUNEJO HAD A MEETING WITH HIS CABINET WHICH LASTED UNTIL THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, SATTAR, WAS EXPECTED TO HAVE RETURNED FROM GENEVA FOR THAT MEETING BUT IS NOW APPARENTLY NOT COMING. ALTHOUGH DETAILS OF WHAT WAS DISCUSSED IN CABINET REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED IN THE PRESS THAT

MOST CABINET MEMBERS ARE INCLINED TO SUPPORT SIGNATURE. WE HAVE HEARD THAT ADVICE FROM THE MFA TEAM IN GENEVA HAS BEEN IN THAT DIRECTION. MY US COLLEAGUE HAS TOLD ME, HOWEVER, THAT THE PAKISTANIS HAVE AGREED WITH THE AMERICANS THAT SOME UNDERSTANDING WITH THE RUSSIANS ABOUT NOT SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE KABUL REGIME AFTER THE CUT-OFF DATE WILL BE ESSENTIAL BEFORE AGREEMENTS CAN BE SIGNED. RAPHEL SAID THAT THE AMERICANS HAVE TAKEN A FIRM LINE ON THIS (PERHAPS JUDGING THAT OTHERWISE THEY WOULD HAVE TROUBLE WITH CONGRESS) THOUGH THEY ARE NOT INSISTING ON ANY FORMAL EXCHANGE OF NOTES - THERE COULD BE A UNILATERAL US STATEMENT, FOR EXAMPLE WHICH WOULD BE TACITLY ACCEPTED BY THE SOVIET SIDE.

5. WHETHER OR NOT THE PAKISTANIS WHILE SIGNING AT GENEVA WOULD MAKE ANY FURTHER CONDITION ABOUT AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT REMAINS TO BE SEEN. THEY ARE STILL ARGUING THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERIM GOVERNMENTS IN PUBLIC, BUT THEY MAY BE SATISFIED WITH VAGUE EXPRESSIONS OF SOVIET INTENT IN THIS REGARD. NOORANI HAS BEEN REPORTED HERE TO HAVE BEEN IN FAVOUR OF SUCH A LINE, THOUGH I NOTE FROM UKMIS GENEVA TELNO 170, TO YOU, PARA 3 THAT HE IS CONSCIOUS OF THE DIFFICULTIES IF IT WERE TO TURN OUT THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE TO GO BACK ON VAGUE PROMISES ABOUT CHANGES IN KABUL. THERE IS SPECULATION HERE ABOUT WHAT WAS DISCUSSED IN THE REPORTED LATEST MEETING IN GENEVA BETWEEN NOORANI AND KOSYREV.

6. WHILE THE DECISION TO SIGN WILL BE THAT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN, AND THE PRIME MINISTER WILL BE INCLINED TOWARDS SIGNATURE, HE IS FULLY AWARE OF THE NEED TO OBTAIN AN AGREEMENT THAT WILL SECURE THE RETURN OF THE REFUGEES. PRESIDENT ZIA IS EVEN MORE CONSCIOUS OF THIS, AND ZIA'S APPROVAL WILL BE NEEDED. I SUSPECT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THEM ARE MORE A QUESTION OF NUANCE AND TACTICS AT THIS MOMENT. ZIA IS, HOWEVER, PREPARED TO ARTICULATE THE PROBLEM ABOUT THE REFUGEES MORE STRONGLY. HE IS LESS INCLINED TO BE BULLIED BY ANY SOVIET IMPOSITION OF DEADLINES FOR AGREEMENT. IN THE INTERVIEW TO THE KHALEEJ TIMES OF DUBAI REFERRED TO ABOVE HE SAID THAT PAKISTAN WAS COMMITTED TO THE GENEVA PROCESS, BUT HAVING A PARTICULAR INTEREST, NOT SHARED BY OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN SECURING THE RETURN OF THE REFUGEES, NEEDED A COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. HE SAID THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM ABOUT SIGNING THE ACCORDS ONCE THERE WAS A CONDITION AGREED WHICH WOULD ENSURE THE REFUGEES' RETURN. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT THE ALLIANCE'S PROPOSALS FOR AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WERE ONLY A FIRST FORMULA, AND FLEXIBLE. HE DECLINED TO SPECULATE ABOUT THE SURVIVABILITY OF THE NAJIB REGIME.

7. IT IS OF COURSE GENERAL HAMID GUL, WORKING PRINCIPALLY TO ZIA,



WHO HAS PROVIDED THE INTER-FACE WITH THE MUJAHIDEEN ALLIANCE IN PESHAWAR. GUL HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE AND MERCURIAL IN RECENT DAYS COMING UP WITH ONE IDEA AFTER ANOTHER BUT ALWAYS PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE ALLIANCE TO IMPROVE THEIR PUBLIC POSTURE IN RELATION TO AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. ON THE FACE OF IT IT IS RATHER SURPRISING THAT THE BREAKING POINT WITH KHALES APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE DESPATCH OF A MUJAHIDEEN DELEGATION TO GENEVA. THIS WAS PROBABLY SYMBOLIC OF THE ATTITUDE OF KHALES AND SAYYAF TO THE WHOLE PROCESS, SO KHALES HAD TO BE EDGED INTO RESIGNATION. GUL MAY BE PAYING SOMEWHAT MORE ATTENTION NOW TO THE VIEWS OF THE MODERATES, REALISING THAT IF THEY WERE TO LEAVE THE ALLIANCE PUBLIC CREDIBILITY WOULD BE THAT MUCH WORSE, BUT IT APPEARS THAT GUL IS ALSO KEEPING A TIGHT THROTTLE ON ARMS SUPPLIES TO THE MODERATES, IF NOT TO ALL THE RESISTANCE GROUPS. THIS IS NO DOUBT ALL PART OF HIS CAMPAIGN TO TRY AND GET THEM TO ADOPT REASONABLE POLITICAL POSITIONS. AS WE ALL KNOW FEW OF THEM ARE REALLY CAPABLE OF THINKING IN IMAGINATIVE POLITICAL TERMS, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF HEKMATYAR, WHO NOW, BY AN ACCIDENT OF ROTATION, TAKES OVER AS PRESIDENT OF THE ALLIANCE FOR A PERIOD WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY REPORTED TO BE SIX MONTHS BUT WE HEAR MAY BE REDUCED TO THREE. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT SORT OF ALLIANCE DELEGATION WILL GO TO GENEVA AND WHEN. THERE IS THE PRESS REPORT THAT A 16 MAN TEAM IS TO GO THIS WEEK LED BY HEKMATYAR.

8. MEANWHILE THERE HAS BEEN NO MENTION IN THE PRESS OF THE IDEA OF RECOGNITION OF A MUJAHIDEEN GOVERNMENT AT THE TIME OF SIGNATURE, IN ORDER TO KEEP THE RESISTANCE SWEET (ON WHICH THE ARGUMENTS IN YOUR TELNO 078 TO UKMIS GENEVA WOULD BE TELLING), PERHAPS BECAUSE CURRENT DISUNITY AMONG THE ALLIANCE DOES NOT INSPIRE CONFIDENCE ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCE OF A CREDIBLE GOVERNMENT.

9. A MAJOR UNCERTAINTY STILL REMAINS ABOUT THE LENGTH OF TIME NAJIB IS LIKELY TO SURVIVE IF THE RUSSIANS LEAVE. MY US COLLEAGUE TOLD ME THAT US AGENCIES RECENTLY CONCLUDED THAT HE COULD SURVIVE FOR A MAXIMUM OF SIX MONTHS. THE IRANIAN AMBASSADOR GAVE IT AS HIS VIEW THAT PROVIDED THERE WAS NO MAJOR DISUNITY IN THE ALLIANCE IT SHOULD ONLY BE A MATTER OF WEEKS. I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT IF THEIR MAN IS ONLY GOING TO SURVIVE FOR SIX MONTHS OR SO THERE WOULD BE ATTRACTIVE FOR MOSCOW IN HELPING TO BRING ABOUT A MORE ORDERLY GOVERNMENT IN KABUL, THOUGH PERHAPS NOT UNTIL AFTER THEY HAVE COMPLETED THEIR TROOP WITHDRAWAL.

10. THE OTHER IMPONDERABLE, OF COURSE, IS AN ASSESSMENT OF SOVIET OF REACTION TO A FAILURE OF THE PAKISTANIS TO SIGN IN GENEVA. A PROPOGANDA BLAST IS STILL POSSIBLE, I IMAGINE, IF THEY DO NOT SIGN

IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS. MY US COLLEAGUE THINKS THAT THE DISCUSSIONS AT GENEVA MAY CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH CERTAIN OUTSTANDING POINTS REPORTED IN UKMIS GENEVA TELNO 170 (EG THE EVEN PHASING OF THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL AFTER THE THREE MONTHS PERIOD). BUT THAT NOTHING OF SUBSTANCE WILL BE RESOLVED UNTIL SHERVARDNADZE'S VISIT TO THE US ON 22 MARCH.

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