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PTQ9937

RELEASED IN FULL

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00
	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	SS-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00
	EPAE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00

/005W

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R 190328Z APR 02  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7935  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO  
SECDEF WASHDC  
JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J5/J3//  
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J3/J5//  
CNO WASHINGTON DC//N3/N53/POLAD//  
CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N00J/N42/N51//  
COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA//00/03/00J//  
NAVSUPPFAC DIEGO GARCIA//N00//

UNCLAS PORT LOUIS 000485

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: MARR, EAIR, PREL, IO, MP, UK  
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SUBJECT: DIEGO GARCIA - AIR MAURITIUS ETOPS FLIGHTS

REF: (A) PORT LOUIS 392 (B) STATE 72273

1. (SBU) ON APRIL 18, CDA BISA WILLIAMS DELIVERED  
REFTEL DEMARCHE TO PAUL BERENGER, THE ACTING PRIME  
MINISTER, MINISTER OF FINANCE, AND ACTING MINISTER  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. POLOFF ACCOMPANIED AS  
NOTETAKER. ACTING PRIME MINISTER BERENGER DID NOT  
IMMEDIATELY APPEAR TO BE FAMILIAR WITH HIS  
GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST REGARDING "ETOPS" FLIGHTS, BUT  
NEVERTHELESS CHUCKLED WHEN HE WAS TOLD THAT THE  
REQUEST SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNITED KINGDOM AS  
THE SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY OVER DIEGO GARCIA. AFTER

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SOME THOUGHT, HE ASKED WHY THE USG'S RESPONSE WAS BEING DELIVERED ORALLY. THE CDA RESPONDED THAT SHE HAD PERSONALLY DEMARCHED HIM ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM WASHINGTON. BERENGER TOOK THE POINT, AND DID NOT PRESS FURTHER FOR USG RATIONALE. HE REQUESTED NONETHELESS THAT THE EMBASSY RESPOND TO THE GOM DIPLOMATIC NOTE WITH AN EMBASSY NOTE REITERATING THE USG'S ANSWER. REF (A) "IF ASKED" POINTS WERE NOT USED.

2. (SBU) COMMENT: THE USG SUCCINCT, LEGALISTIC RESPONSE TO THE GOM REQUEST TO USE DIEGO GARCIA AIRPORT CAUGHT ACTING PM BERENGER OFF GUARD, NOT ONLY BECAUSE HE WAS APPARENTLY UNAWARE THAT A FORMAL DIPLOMATIC NOTE HAD BEEN SENT, BUT ALSO BECAUSE HE HAS CONVINCED HIMSELF THAT UK FOREIGN SECRETARY JACK STRAW'S LETTER ON DIEGO GARCIA SIGNIFIES A SEA

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CHANGE IN HMG/USG/GOM RELATIONS ON THE SUBJECT.  
THIS DEMARCHE MAY HAVE HELPED HIM "SMELL THE COFFEE."

WILLIAMS

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