

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 018394

FOLLOWING REPEAT NEW DELHI 1085 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO COLOMBO
DACCA ISLAMABAD MOSCOW USUN NEW YORK JAN 20.
QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 1085

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, IN, XO, UNGA

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN NEGOTIATOR MENDELVICH

REF: NEW DELHI 990

1. ACCORDING TO S. SHAHABUDDIN, MEA JOINT SECRETARY
RESPONSIBLE FOR INDIAN OCEAN MATTERS, VISITING SOVIET
NEGOTIATOR L.I. MENDELEVICH GAVE MEA A TWO HOUR DETAILED
BRIEFING ON US-SOVIET INDIAN OCEAN TALKS. SHAHABUDDIN
TOLD POL COUNSELOR THAT MENDELEVICH'S APPROACH HAD BEEN
ALTOGETHER NON-CONTENTIOUS, AND THAT HE HAD SPOKEN HIGHLY
OF DIRECTOR WARNKE BOTH AS A PERSON AND AS A SKILLED
AND EXPERIENCED NEGOTIATOR. SHAHABUDDIN REPORTED THAT
MENDELEVICH HAD EXPRESSED OPTIMISM THAT DESPITE PRESENT
DIFFERENCES A FORCE STABILIZATION AGREEMENT WOULD BE
REACHED BY MID-1978.

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2. SHAHABUDDIN NOTED THAT THE INDIANS WERE PLEASED THAT
THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE SOVIET PRESENTATION WHICH
CONFLICTED WITH OR CONTRADICTED WITH THE BRIEFINGS THEY
HAVE RECEIVED FROM US SIDE. HE STATED THAT MENDELEVICH
CHARACTERIZED THE EVENTUAL SOV GOAL AS THE ELIMINATION
OF ALL FOREIGN BASES AND OF FACILITIES WHICH COULD BE

USED FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF FOREIGN MILITARY AND NAVAL FORCES. MENDELEVICH HAD ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WOULD "ALWAYS" BE A FOREIGN MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE AREA AT ANY GIVEN TIME.

3. IN SHAHABUDDIN'S ACCOUNT, THE MAIN POINTS OF DIS-AGREEMENT WITH THE US TO WHICH MENDELEVICH CALLED ATTENTION WERE THE ISSUES OF STRATEGIC WEAPONS AND OF COMMITMENT IN THE STABILIZATION AGREEMENT TO FUTURE REDUCTION. HE DID NOT GET INTO THE QUESTION OF ALLIED FORCES OR OF DEFINITION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA. HE CALLED ATTENTION TO THE SOVIET POSITION ON DIEGO GARCIA BUT, ACCORDING TO SHAHABUDDIN, WAS "SOPHISTICATED ENOUGH" NOT TO SPEAK OF DIEGO AS A "THREAT" TO THE LITTORAL STATES.

4. MENDELEVICH DISCUSSED THE CHANGE IN THE SOVIET VOTE ON THE IOZP IN TERMS OF MORE ACCEPTABLE WORDING OF THIS YEAR'S RESOLUTION. SHAHABUDDIN RECOLLECTED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD TOLD THE INDIANS THAT THE EARLIER RESOLUTION HAD BEEN TOO CRITICAL OF BOTH SUPERPOWERS. MENDELEVICH MADE IT CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THE PRESENT TALKS WERE NOT TAKING PLACE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE IOZP. THE INDIANS, FOR THEIR PART, TOLD HIM THAT THEY WELCOMED THE TALKS AND WOULD WANT THEM TO BE FOLLOWED BY FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS ON REDUCTION. THEY SAID THAT US-SOVIET AGREEMENT SHOULD ENABLE "YOU BOTH" TO COOPERATE MORE FULLY WITH THE LITTORAL STATES
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IN IMPLEMENTING THE IOZP RESOLUTION.

5. DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT TO OTHER ADDRESSEES AS APPROPRIATE.
GOHEEN UNQUOTE VANCE

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