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Director of
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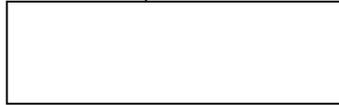
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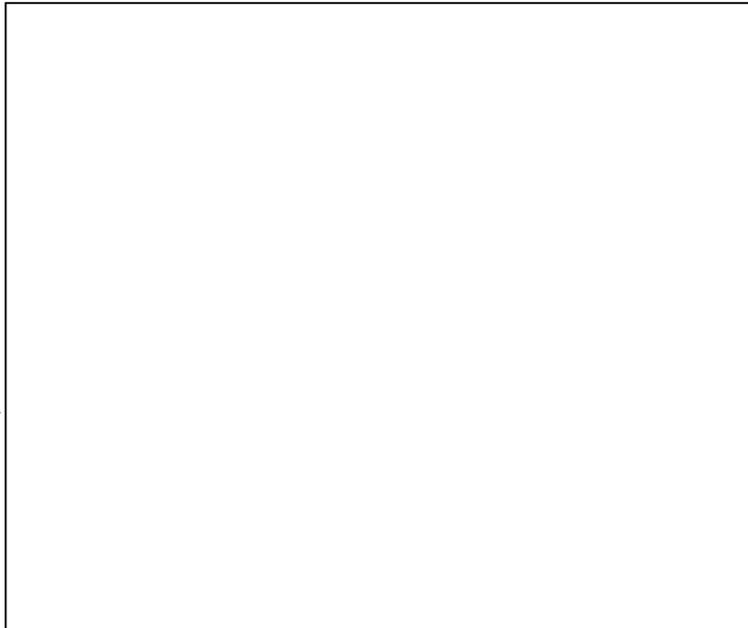
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Contents



USSR-Afghanistan: Claimed Plan for Geneva Talks 3



~~Top Secret~~



28 August 1987

3 5 1 0



~~Top Secret~~

**USSR-
AFGHANISTAN:**

Claimed Plan for Geneva Talks

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Rogachev's claim Tuesday that plans are being made for a new round of UN-mediated indirect talks on Afghanistan seems to be a public relations ploy in that the Soviets have deflected all proposals to prepare for a Geneva session. [redacted]

Rogachev told a news conference in Moscow that "specific dates" for withdrawing Soviet troops from Afghanistan will be set at the next round of Geneva negotiations, for which he claimed preparations were under way. The text of Rogachev's remarks did not appear in the Soviet press, and it is unclear whether he was referring to a time frame for withdrawal or to agreement on when it should begin. Pakistan said last week it would press the Soviets to resume both the Geneva talks and bilateral discussions. [redacted]

[redacted]

In recent months, the Soviets have frustrated UN negotiator Cordovez's attempts to set up shuttle negotiations between Islamabad and Kabul and deflected Pakistan's request that First Deputy Foreign Minister Vorontsov visit Islamabad. Both Cordovez and the Pakistanis hoped that their respective discussions would pave the way for settling the withdrawal issue at Geneva soon. [redacted]

Comment: Rogachev's claims are probably designed to answer Pakistan's public call for talks and to influence this fall's UN General Assembly vote on Afghanistan by suggesting that Soviet-Afghan flexibility has made a breakthrough in the negotiations imminent. He failed to waive Moscow's earlier conditions for setting a withdrawal timetable. The Soviets will probably put off holding another Geneva round until after the General Assembly vote and resolution of the threatened suspension of US aid to Pakistan over the nuclear proliferation issue. [redacted]

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28 August 1987

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