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TEXT
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SUBJECT: REACTION TO CHRISTOPHER STATEMENT ON
WALDHEIM AND PAPAL AWARD FOR WALDHEIM

1. SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST. REPORTS IN AUSTRIA OF AUGUST 12 TO EFFECT THAT SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER HAS PUBLICLY CONFIRMED THAT THE 1987 WATCHLIST DECISION ON **KURT WALDHEIM** STANDS HAVE TRIGGERED CRITICISM FROM FOREIGN MINISTER MOCK. WALDHEIM IS, ACCORDING TO AUSTRIAN PRESS REPORTS, PURSUING AN INVITATION TO THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN SUMMER 1995 IN NEW YORK. MOCK REPORTEDLY REACTED NEGATIVELY TO SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S "CRITICISM" OF THE FACT THAT WALDHEIM RECEIVED A HIGH AWARD BY THE VATICAN IN JULY FOR HIS "EFFORTS FOR PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING." THE AWARD TRIGGERED PROTESTS FROM THE JEWISH ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE AND LED TO INQUIRIES BY THE

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ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. EMBASSY VIENNA WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S COMMENT ON ACCURACY OF THESE REPORTS -- HAS THE SECRETARY IN FACT COMMENTED PUBLICLY ON THE WATCHLIST/VISA ISSUE? END SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST.

CHRISTOPHER STATEMENT -- MOCK REACTION

2. SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S REPORTED AUGUST 12 STATEMENT THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION WOULD UPHOLD THE WATCHLIST DECISION AGAINST FORMER AUSTRIAN PRESIDENT WALDHEIM AND HIS REPORTED STATEMENT THAT HE WOULD NOT WANT TO COMMENT ON THE RECENT PAPAL AWARD FOR WALDHEIM TRIGGERED CRITICISM BY FOREIGN MINISTER MOCK. PRESS REPORTING SAYS THAT MOCK SAID IT WAS "INCOMPREHENSIBLE" THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION "CRITICIZED" AN AWARD ISSUED BY THE POPE ON THE BASIS OF WALDHEIM'S EFFORTS FOR PEACE AND INTERNATIONAL UNDERSTANDING IN HIS CAPACITY AS UN SECRETARY GENERAL. PRESS REPORTS ADD THAT SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS HAD FOUND THE ALLEGATIONS MADE IN THE "DIRT CAMPAIGN" AGAINST WALDHEIM WERE UNSUBSTANTIATED AND THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER CONCLUDED THAT SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S REMARKS WERE EVEN MORE REGRETTABLE IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THEY IN NO WAY CORRESPONDED WITH THE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND THE U.S.

WALDHEIM COMMENT -- UN ANNIVERSARY

3. IN THE AUGUST 14 EDITION OF THE MASS-TABLOID "KRONENZEITUNG," WALDHEIM ATTRIBUTED CHRISTOPHER'S REMARKS TO THE FACT THAT "IT BOTHERS SOME PEOPLE THAT I RECEIVED THIS AWARD FROM THE VATICAN, SINCE THE HOLY FATHER IS THE HIGHEST MORAL AUTHORITY OF CHRISTIANITY." WALDHEIM ALSO SPECULATED THAT "ONE OBVIOUSLY WANTS TO PREVENT MY PARTICIPATION IN THE 50-YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OF THE UN" IN SUMMER 1995. ASKED WHETHER THE U.S. COULD PREVENT HIS PARTICIPATION, WALDHEIM SAID "IN PRINCIPLE, YES." HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE UN WOULD CONSIDER THIS AN "UNFRIENDLY ACT."

MFA EFFORTS

4. A REPORT IN THE AUGUST 16 EDITION OF THE INDEPENDENT DAILY "DER STANDARD" MAINTAINS THAT THE AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS, OVER THE PAST MONTHS, ATTEMPTED IN VAIN TO OBTAIN AN INVITATION FOR WALDHEIM TO THE UN ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS. THE AUTHOR OF THE ARTICLE, U.S. SPECIALIST ERIC FREY,

DEPLORES THAT FOREIGN MINISTER MOCK HAS MADE WALDHEIM'S REMOVAL FROM THE WATCHLIST ONE OF THE KEY GOALS OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY. (FYI: NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS ASSERTION EXISTS, ALTHOUGH MOCK HAS DISCUSSED THE ISSUE WITH AMBASSADOR HUNT. HE HAS RECEIVED DISCOURAGEMENT. AMBASSADOR HUNT HAS ALSO TOLD HELMUT TUERK, AUSTRIA'S AMBASSADOR TO WASHINGTON, THAT HE IS COMPROMISING HIS CREDIBILITY BY PURSUING THE MATTER. END FYI.)

5. ACCORDING TO FREY, THE WALDHEIM ISSUE HAS BECOME A "NATIONAL CAUSE," PURSUED INTENSIVELY BY THE AUSTRIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON AS WELL AS BY "HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIALS" IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. FREY DEFINES THESE EFFORTS AS "BOTH CLUMSY AND USELESS," MERELY CONFIRMING THE LACK OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES REGARDING THE WALDHEIM AFFAIR. "HERE NOBODY UNDERSTANDS WHY WALDHEIM IS OSTRACIZED DESPITE THE FACT THAT HE WAS NO WAR CRIMINAL. OUTSIDE OUR BORDERS, NOBODY UNDERSTANDS WHY AUSTRIA IS MAKING SUCH EFFORTS FOR A MAN WHO HAS NEVER REVEALED THE FULL TRUTH ABOUT HIS ROLE IN WORLD WAR II." FREY CONCLUDES THAT WALDHEIM HAS BECOME A SYMBOL FOR AN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PAST WHICH AUSTRIA HAS ONLY RECENTLY BEGUN TO OVERCOME. AN "ENTERPRISE WALDHEIM" WOULD, ACCORDING TO FREY, REVIVE EXACTLY THAT IMAGE OF AUSTRIA WHICH MANY AUSTRIANS ARE ATTEMPTING TO REVERSE WITH A LOT OF EFFORT -- AN AUSTRIA WHICH DID NOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR ITS ROLE IN THE ANSCHLUSS AND THE HOLOCAUST.

HISTORY OF PAPAL AWARD

6. WALDHEIM WAS AWARDED THE PAPAL KNIGHTHOOD OF THE ORDINE PIANO, REPORTEDLY ONE OF THE HIGHEST PAPAL AWARDS, ON JULY 6. THE CEREMONY TOOK PLACE IN VIENNA, WHERE THE AWARD WAS EXTENDED BY PAPAL NUNCIO SQUICCIARINI, IN THE PRESENCE OF JUSTICE MINISTER MICHALEK AND CATHOLIC CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES. AT THE CEREMONY, THE NUNCIO REFERRED TO WALDHEIM'S GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS AS "PEACEMAKER AND CRISIS MANAGER" FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN HIS ROLE AS UN SECRETARY GENERAL. SQUICCIARINI ALSO PRAISED THE FORMER PRESIDENT'S MODEL ROLE AS HUMAN BEING AND CHRISTIAN WITH REGARD TO CHRISTIAN FAMILY VALUES.

7. THREE WEEKS LATER, THE JEWISH ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE STRONGLY PROTESTED THE EXTENSION OF THE AWARD TO WALDHEIM. ROBERT GOLDMANN, THE LEAGUE'S EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVE, REPORTEDLY STRESSED THAT THE VATICAN "OWES THE WORLD AN EXPLANATION FOR AN AWARD WHICH IS AT BEST ABSURD AND AT WORST A DEGRADATION FOR ALL THOSE WORKING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS."

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8. THE AUSTRIAN PRESS HAS REPORTED THAT IN THE BEGINNING OF AUGUST, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT SOUGHT CLARIFICATION OF THE MATTER. THE CHARGE OF THE HOLY SEE IN TEL AVIV, MONSIGNORE THOMAS GALICSON, WAS, ACCORDING TO REPORTS ON AUGUST 8 AND 9, SUMMONED TO THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT PRESIDUM TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER'S ADVISOR FOR INTERCONFESSIONAL MATTERS, ELTAN MARGALIT. MARGALIT EXPRESSED ISRAEL'S "CONCERN AND SURPRISE" OVER THE EXTENSION OF THE AWARD TO WALDHEIM. AT THE VATICAN, THE DESIGNATED ISRAELI AMBASSADOR TO THE HOLY SEE, SHMUEL HADASS, INQUIRED WITH MONSIGNORE LUIGI GATTI FROM THE VATICAN STATE SECRETARIAT ABOUT THE AWARD.

9. AS OF AUGUST 12, THE ISRAELI AMBASSDOR IN VIENNA, YOSEF GOVRIN, HAD NOT TALKED WITH THE PAPAL NUNCIO. GOVRIN NOTED THAT THE AUSTRIAN PRESS HAD PLAYED DOWN THE AWARD -- SOMETHING HE CONSIDERED A POSITIVE SIGN ABOUT IMPROVING AUSTRO-ISRAELI RELATIONS. HE WAS CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT THE AWARD HAD BEEN INTERPRETED IN THE MFA IN THE CONTEXT OF TREATING WALDHEIM GENEROUSLY BECAUSE HE WAS AN ELDERLY MAN.

COMMENT

10. SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER'S REMARKS AND THE REACTION BY MOCK AND WALDHEIM RECEIVED SOME, BUT LIMITED ATTENTION BY THE AUSTRIAN MEDIA. THE MEDIA, AS WELL AS THE AUSTRIAN BODY POLITIC, HAVE TAKEN A RATHER RESERVED STANCE ON THE WALDHEIM ISSUE -- VERY MUCH IN CONTRAST TO THE PUBLIC ATMOSPHERE ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO, WHEN WALDHEIM WAS PRESIDENT. CONTRARY TO THE OPINION VOICED IN THE ARTICLE IN "DER STANDARD," EVEN THE AUSTRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY SEEMS MERELY TO BE GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS IN OCCASIONALLY RAISING THE WATCHLIST ISSUE -- PROBABLY GIVING IN TO SUBSTANTIAL PUSHING ON THE PART OF WALDHEIM. NONETHELESS, THE EMOTIONS RAISED BY THE VATICAN AWARD SHOULD BE INFORMATIVE FOR THE GOA IN ASSESSING THE CONTINUED PARIASH STATUS WALDHEIM ENJOYS. IF THE GOA TAKES THE POINT, IT SHOULD DISTANCE ITSELF FROM ANY CAMPAIGN FOR A WALDHEIM VISA IN 1995, DESPITE LINGERING LATENT RESENTMENT THAT THE WALDHEIM WATCHLIST DECISION WAS A NATIONAL INSULT AND REFLECTED INJUSTICE VIS-A-VIS THE AUSTRIAN WAR GENERATION. CORBETT

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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