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SUBJECT: GUYANA-SURINAM DISPUTE OVER PATROLLING OF CORENTYNE RIVER

REF: (A) PARAMARIBO 0455 (B) GEORGETOWN 1270 (NOTAL)

1. RECENT DISPUTE BETWEEN GUYANA AND SURINAM OVER GUYANESE PATROL BOAT ON CORENTYNE RIVER (REF A) HAS ATTRACTED LITTLE ATTENTION IN GUYANA. LOCAL PRESS REPORTED GUYANA CONSUL GENERAL W.O. KENDALL'S PRESS CONFERENCE AND STORY OF NETHERLANDS CONSUL GENERAL PERCY WIJNGAARDE'S TRIP TO SURINAM. ONLY GOVT COMMENT WAS STATEMENT BY UNIDENTIFIED FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN WHO REPORTEDLY SAID GOG HOPED MATTER COULD BE RESOLVED THROUGH CONSULTATIONS.

2. AT HEART OF PROBLEM IS GUYANA'S SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL BORDER WITH SURINAM ALONG CORENTYNE RIVER, ENTIRE RIVER BELONGS TO SURINAM. GOG IS THEREFORE UHKBLE TO USE RIVER WITHOUT GOSPERMISSION TO PATROL ITS OWN COASTLINE TO STOP ILLEGAL MOVEMENT OF GOODS, ARMS, OR PERSONS. REASON FOR GOG'S RECENT STRONG STAND, INCLUDING SUSPENSION OF SUGAR SALES TO SURINAM, MAYBE CONCERN FOR SECURITY FOLLOWING SHOOTING OF POLICEMAN DURING ATTACK ON CORENTYNE HIGHWAY TOLLGATE IN JULY (REF B). UNLESS GOG AND GOS CAN REACH SOLUTION, PATROLLING OF CORENTYNE RIVER IS LIKELY TO BE CONTINUAL IRRITANT IN GOG-GOS RELATIONS AND NAGGING REMINDER OF UNRESOLVED NEW RIVER TRIANGLE BORDER DISPUTE. HOWEVER IT SHOULD NOT RPT NOT BE VIEWED AS REVERSAL OF GOG DESIRE TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH SURINAM.

3. WIJNGAARDE (PLEASE PROTECT) TOLD ME ON RETUR FROM SURINAM HE CONSIDERED BOUNDARY DEMARCATON "UNREALISTIC" AND SAID HE SYMPATHIZED WITH GOG'S CONCERN OVER SMUGGLING, BOTH OF ARMS INTO GUYANA AND OF FLOUR AND OTHER GOODS INTO SURINAM KREBS

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