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E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: OPRC

SUBJECT: S/NIS PRESS GUIDANCE - APRIL 14, 1995

1. THE FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED AND APPROVED BY THE OFFICE OF THE AMBASSADOR-AT-LARGE FOR THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES FOR THE DEPARTMENT BRIEFINGS. QUESTIONS SHOULD BE REFERRED TO ANNE JOHNSON, SINIS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

RUSSIA: CHECHNYA

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: THEODORE SELLIN
DATE/CASE ID: 08 OCT 2009 200901541

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Q: DO YOU HAVE AN UPDATE ON CHECHN UNCLASSIFIED

A: RUSSIAN FORCES REPORTEDLY POUNDED THE TOWN OF BAMUT THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT LAST NIGHT AND HAVE SURROUNDED IT TODAY.

THE CAPTURE OF BAMUT WOULD EFFECTIVELY GIVE THE RUSSIANS CONTROL OVER ALL THE URBAN AND AGRICULTURAL AREAS IN CHECHNYA.

CHECHEN FIGHTERS WHO HAVE FLED THE TOWNS HAVE TAKEN UP POSITIONS IN THE FOOTHILLS AND IN THE MOUNTAINS IN SOUTHERN CHECHNYA.

JOURNALISTS WHO HAVE TRAVELED TO BAMUT REPORT THAT THE TOWN ITSELF IS NEARLY ABANDONED BUT THAT CHECHEN FIGHTERS HAVE HOLED UP IN CONCRETE BUNKERS IN A FORMER SOVIET MISSILE BASE.

WE BELIEVE EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE BY ALL CONCERNED TO STOP THE FIGHTING AND IMMEDIATELY BEGIN TO WORK WITH THE OSCE TO START THE PROCESS OF ESTABLISHING A MECHANISM FOR PEACEFULLY RESOLVING THIS DISPUTE.

WE ARE DEEPLY DISTURBED BY THE CONTINUING REPORTS OF ATROCITIES AGAINST CIVILIANS IN SAMASHKI. WE URGE THE RUSSIAN TROOPS TO RESPECT INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAWS SUCH AS THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS ON THE PROTECTION OF THE VICTIMS OF ARMED CONFLICT AND PROTOCOL II ON
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INTERNAL ARMED CONFLICTS.

SPECIFICALLY, WE URGE THEM TO RESPECT THE REQUIREMENTS OF COMMON ARTICLE 3 TO THE 1949 CONVENTIONS ON HUMANE TREATMENT FOR CAPTURED INDIVIDUALS AND THE REQUIREMENT IN PROTOCOL II THAT CIVILIANS NOT BE MADE THE OBJECT OF ATTACKS.

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WE ALSO CALL UPON THEM TO UNCLASSIFIED THE
CODE OF CONDUCT, SIGNED BY THE U.S.
PARTICIPATING STATES, INCLUDING RUSSIA, LAST
DECEMBER.

SPECIFICIALLY, WE URGE RUSSIA TO RESPECT THE
COMMITMENT TO USE FORCE "COMMENSURATE WITH THE
NEEDS FOR ENFORCEMENT," AND TO "TAKE DUE CARE
TO AVOID INJURY TO CIVILIANS OR THEIR PROPERTY."

UKRAINE: CLOSING CHORNOBYL

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. REACTION TO UKRAINERS STATEMENT
THAT IT WILL CLOSE THE CHORNOBYL NUCLEAR POWER PLANT BY
THE END OF 1999? WILL THE U.S. OFFER ANY FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE?

A: WE UNDERSTAND THAT PRESIDENT KUCHMA TOLD A
DELEGATION REPRESENTING THE EU AND G-7 THAT
UKRAINE IS PREPARED TO CLOSE THE TWO WORKING
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REACTORS AT THE CHORNOBYL NUCLEAR POWER PLANT
BY THE END OF 1999. WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT
UKRAINE HAS PROPOSED A PLAN TO BUILD A
REPLACEMENT GAS POWERED ELECTRICITY PLANT IN
THE CHORNOBYL REGION.

WE ARE ENCOURAGED THAT PRESIDENT KUCHMA HAS
PROPOSED A TARGET DATE TO CLOSE THE CHORNOBYL
POWER PLANT, WHICH WE CONSIDER UNSAFE.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT CHORNOBYL PROVIDES AN
IMPORTANT SHARE OF UKRAINE'S ELECTRICITY AND
THAT UKRAINE IS HAVING DIFFICULTIES OBTAINING
SUFFICIENT ENERGY.

THE UNITED STATES IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH
UKRAINE, OUR G-7 PARTNERS, THE EU AND THE
INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO

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IMPLEMENT THE NAPLES ACTION PLAN
COMPREHENSIVE REFORM OF UKRAINE'S ENERGY
SECTOR. THE PLAN ENVISIONS CLOSING CHORNOBYL,
DEVELOPMENT OF LEAST-COST ALTERNATIVE ENERGY
SOURCES AND PROMOTING ENERGY EFFICIENCY.

TAJIKISTAN: UPDATE ON FIGHTING

Q: DO YOU HAVE AN UPDATE ON THE FIGHTING IN TAJIKISTAN?

A: ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, FIGHTING BETWEEN
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RUSSIAN/CIS BORDER GUARDS AND TAJIK OPPOSITION
FORCES CONTINUED YESTERDAY ALONG THE
TAJIKISTAN-AFGHANISTAN BORDER IN TAJIKISTAN'S
GORNO-BADAKHSHAN PROVINCE. THIS IS THE SEVENTH
STRAIGHT DAY OF MILITARY CLASHES IN THAT
REGION. THE RUSSIAN PRESS REPORTS THAT
CASUALTIES AMONG RUSSIAN AND CIS FORCES TOTAL
AT LEAST 35 KILLED AND DOZENS WOUNDED. THERE
ARE NO RELIABLE SOURCES FOR CASUALTIES AMONG
THE TAJIK OPPOSITION, THOUGH SOME PRESS REPORTS
LIST THEM AT OVER 100.

CREDIBLE SOURCES REPORT THAT FIXED-WING
AIRCRAFT STRUCK SEVERAL LOCATIONS IN NORTHERN
AFGHANISTAN APRIL 12 AND 13. AMONG THE

REPORTED TARGETS WAS THE TAJIK OPPOSITION'S
HEADQUARTERS IN TALOQAN (TAL'-UH-KHANI.
DETAILS OF CASUALTIES ARE SKETCHY, WITH REPORTS
RANGING FROM 6 TO 125 KILLED. WE UNDERSTAND
THAT RUSSIAN AUTHORITIES HAVE DECLINED TO
COMMENT ON ALLEGATIONS THAT RUSSIAN AIRCRAFT
WERE INVOLVED IN THE ATTACK.

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. VIEW OF THE RENEWED FIGHTING?

A: -- WE DEPLORE THE RECENT ESCALATION IN VIOLENCE

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AND CALL ON ALL PARTIES TO
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FROM FURTHER MILITARY CONFLICT AND TO RETURN AS
SOON AS POSSIBLE TO THE UN-MEDIATED PEACE
TALKS. THESE, WE BELIEVE, OFFER THE BEST HOPE
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TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM. WE SUPPORT THE CALL BY
UN SPECIAL ENVOY PIRIZ-BALLON FOR HIGH-LEVEL
MEETINGS AIMED AT ENDING THE FIGHTING AND
REESTABLISHING A CEASE-FIRE.

Q: WHAT IS THE U.S. REACTION TO PRESIDENT YELTSINIS
PLEDGE TO PROVIDE MORE AID TO HELP FIGHT THE TAJIK
REBELS?

A: -- WE URGE RUSSIA TO SUPPORT U.N. EFFORTS TO DEAL
WITH THE TAJIK CIVIL CONFLICT. THE RUSSIAN
GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN A STRONG SUPPORTER OF THE
UN-LED TAJIKISTAN PEACE PROCESS. WE ENCOURAGE
IT TO CONTINUE TO FOCUS ITS EFFORTS ON
INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A POLITICAL
RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT.

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