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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, KNNP, KN, RS, US

SUBJECT: BRIEFING THE RUSSIANS ON U.S.-DPRK DISCUSSIONS

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2. AMBASSADOR AT-LARGE ROBERT L. GALLUCCI CALLED IN
RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR YULIY VORONTSOV SEPTEMBER 20 TO BRIEF
VORONTSOV ON THE STATUS OF OUR EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE NORTH
KOREA NUCLEAR PROBLEM. VORONTSOV WAS ACCOMPANIED BY
RUSSIAN EMBASSY ASIA-WATCHER VLADIMIR RAKHMANIN. U.S.
PARTICIPANTS INCLUDED JOEL WIT (S/AL), JEFF GOLDSTEIN
(EAP/K) AND KEN FORDER (EUR/ISCA) - NOTETAKER.

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Marvin Russell, Senior
Reviewer

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3. GALLUCCI BEGAN THE SESSION BY STRESSING HIS DESIRE TO KEEP THE RUSSIANS FULLY INFORMED OF OUR EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE. HE THEN GAVE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HIS EFFORTS TO DATE, HIGHLIGHTING EARLIER ROUNDS IN GENEVA AS WELL AS HIS RECENT TRIPS TO THE FAR EAST AND RUSSIA. GALLUCCI NOTED THAT NORTH KOREA HAD INITIALLY REQUESTED RUSSIAN LIGHT WATER REACTORS, BUT THAT THIS HAD PROVEN IMPOSSIBLE DUE TO LACK OF FINANCING. ONLY SOUTH KOREAN REACTORS, FINANCED LARGELY BY SEOUL WITH SOME HELP FROM TOKYO, PASSED THE TEST, NAMELY, THAT ANY LIGHT WATER REACTOR PACKAGE HAD TO

BE POLITICALLY, TECHNICALLY AND FINANCIALLY VIABLE. GALLUCCI EXPLAINED THAT HIS LATEST ASIA SWING WAS DESIGNED TO NAIL DOWN SUPPORT FOR THE SOUTH KOREAN OPTION.

4. GALLUCCI SAID THE TASK AT HAND WAS TO CONVINCING THE DPRK THAT THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE TO SOUTH KOREAN REACTORS. THE NORTH KOREANS, HE EXPLAINED, WERE SUSPICIOUS THAT SOUTH KOREA COULD MANIPULATE SUCH A SOLUTION TO GAIN POLITICAL LEVERAGE. WE CONCEIVED THE IDEA OF MANAGING REACTOR DELIVERY THROUGH A U.S.-LED INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM IN PART, TO MITIGATE SUCH CONCERNS. THE CONSORTIUM (KEDO)

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 COULD SERVE TO INSULATE THE NORTH FROM THE SOUTH AND HELP KEEP POLITICS OUT OF THE ISSUE. HIGHLIGHTING RECENT REPORTS OF MINATOM EFFORTS TO PUSH FOR RUSSIAN REACTORS (AS WELL AS EFFORTS BY OTHER WESTERN COMPANIES TO MARKET THEIR WARES), GALLUCCI NOTED THAT WE ARE REQUESTING THAT GOVERNMENTS DISCOURAGE THEIR COMPANIES FROM SUGGESTING TO THE DPRK THAT OTHER REACTOR SOURCES COULD PROVE FEASIBLE.

5. GALLUCCI NOTED THAT AFTER THE LAST MEETING IN GENEVA, HE HAD FELT THAT THE GROUND HAD BEEN LAID FOR AN EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THE RECENT EXPERTS MEETING IN BERLIN WAS A STEP BACKWARD. THE NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION WAS LED BY A VICE ECONOMICS MINISTER WHO PROVED PARTICULARLY UNCOOPERATIVE. THE DPRK DELEGATION HAD REJECTED SOUTH KOREAN REACTORS AND HAD ADDED NEW DEMANDS (INCLUDING COMPENSATION FOR LOST INVESTMENT IN NUCLEAR R&D). GALLUCCI SAID HE PLANNED TO IGNORE BERLIN AND TRY TO PICK UP WHERE HE LEFT OFF WITH VICE MINISTER KANG AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE LAST GENEVA ROUND. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT FOUR KEY ISSUES REMAINED UNRESOLVED: (1) REACTOR

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ARCHITECTURE, (2) DISPOSITION OF THE SPENT FUEL FROM THE 5 MW REACTOR; (3) REACTOR RESTART; AND (4) SPECIAL INSPECTIONS.

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7. GALLUCCI SAID THAT IF WE MAKE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS TOWARD A SOLUTION AT THE NEXT GENEVA SESSION, THE U.S. MIGHT CALL A MEETING IN WASHINGTON OF GOVERNMENTS THAT COULD PARTICIPATE IN KEDO. RUSSIA WOULD NATURALLY BE INVITED. GALLUCCI SAID RUSSIA COULD POSSIBLY WIN REPROCESSING CONTRACTS (IF NORTH KOREA AGREED TO EXPORT THE SPENT FUEL IN THE YONGBYON COOLING PONDS) AND ENRICHMENT SERVICES CONTRACTS (ONCE THE LIGHT WATER REACTORS COME ON LINE).

8. VORONTSOV EXPECTED THAT THE REACTOR SOURCE WOULD POSE THE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM. HE DOUBTED THAT NORTH KOREA WOULD ACCEPT SOUTH KOREAN REACTORS, NOTING THAT PYONGYANG WOULD VIEW ROK REACTORS AS AN UNACCEPTABLE "LOSS OF FACE." GALLUCCI RESPONDED THAT WE HAD CONCEIVED THE KEDO CONSORTIUM IDEA, IN PART, TO HELP THE DPRK SWALLOW ROK REACTORS. HE AGREED WITH VORONTSOV THAT SOUTH KOREA WOULD HAVE TO COOPERATE IN EFFORTS TO MAKE ROK REACTORS MORE PALATABLE TO PYONGYANG.

9. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM VORONTSOV, GALLUCCI SAID THE PYONGYANG EXPERTS MEETING HAD GONE WELL BUT THAT THE U.S. WOULD ONLY AGREE TO ESTABLISH A LIAISON OFFICE IN THE DPRK AS PART OF AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT OF THE NUCLEAR PROBLEM. VORONTSOV NOTED THAT THIS WAS A GOOD BARGAINING CHIP.

10. GALLUCCI ASKED ABOUT RUSSIAN DFM PANOV'S TRIP TO THE

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DPRK. VORONTSOV SAID PANOV WOULD BE IN NORTH KOREA UNTIL
SEPTEMBER 25 AND THAT THE PRIMARY REASON FOR HIS TRAVEL WAS
TO DISCUSS BILATERAL RUSSIAN-NORTH KOREAN TIES (ESPECIALLY
TRADE LINKS). VORONTSOV NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE NUCLEAR
QUESTION WOULD INEVITABLY ARISE AND THAT MOSCOW WOULD
ENSURE THAT GALLUCCI IS BRIEFED ON PANOV'S TRIP (VIA THE
RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR IN GENEVA).

11. VORONTSOV CLOSED THE MEETING BY WISHING GALLUCCI
SUCCESS. HE SAID GALLUCCI HAD "TERRIFIC PATIENCE,"

CHRISTOPHER

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