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2000-06-15 11.47

Embassy The Hague

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C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 001779

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/14/2010

TAGS: PREL, ETTTC, CVIS, PHUM, SR, NL, EUN

SUBJECT: DUTCH THOUGHTS ON U.S.- EU VISA BAN AND SANCTIONS COORDINATION

REF: A. SECSTATE 108488

B. SECSTATE 109535

C. BRUSSELS 3427

D. LONDON 4266

1.(C) SUMMARY: THE DUTCH ARE PLEASED THAT THE 6/13-14 EU GAC ENDORSED MORE FREQUENT UPDATES OF THE EU SERBIA VISA BAN LIST. THEY THINK THEY NOW HAVE A POLITICALLY RESPONSIVE TOOL TO PRESSURE MILOSEVIC AND HIS REGIME. THEY STILL SUPPORT CLOSER EU COORDINATION WITH NON-EU STATES ON FINANCIAL SANCTIONS, BUT SEE LITTLE PROSPECT OF AN EU CONSENSUS ON THIS POINT. THEY SUGGEST MORE AD HOC APPROACHES TO THIS PROBLEM AND WELCOME FURTHER BILATERAL CONSULTATION WITH THE U.S. FINALLY, THE DUTCH SAY THAT THE UK AND THE NETHERLANDS ARE "BRAINSTORMING" ON HOW TO MANAGE ANTICIPATED AUGUST CALLS TO DROP OUTRIGHT THE EU SERBIA FLIGHT BAN. END SUMMARY.

2.(C) IN 6/15 FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSIONS ON THE EU VISA BAN PROCESS (REF. A) AND FINANCIAL SANCTIONS COORDINATION, THE DUTCH SAID THEY WERE PLEASED THAT THE 6/13-14 EU GAC ENDORSED MORE FREQUENT UPDATES OF THE EU SERBIA VISA BAN LIST. THEY THINK THEY NOW HAVE A POLITICALLY RESPONSIVE TOOL TO PRESSURE MILOSEVIC AND HIS REGIME. THEY CAUTION, THOUGH, THAT THIS POLITICAL COMMITMENT COULD STILL PROVE ELUSIVE IN PRACTICE. STILL, THEY HOPE TO BUILD ON THE GAC MOMENTUM FOR IMPROVEMENTS THAT WILL LEAD TO A MORE TRANSPARENT AND SYSTEMATIC VISA NOMINATION AND MAINTENANCE PROCESS. "NOW ONLY THREE OR FOUR COUNTRIES USE THE COREU MESSAGE SYSTEM, AS WE AGREED, TO SUGGEST NAMES. AND THEN OFTEN NO ONE SAYS ANYTHING TO EACH OTHER IN REPOSE TO THE SUGGESTIONS," ONE MFA OFFICIAL DESCRIBED," OTHER (EU MEMBER STATES) MIGHT BE ACTIVE LOCALLY AMONG EU CHIEFS OF MISSION IN BELGRADE (REF.D), BUT THERE IS NO PROOF OF THAT. MUCH DEPENDS ON THE PRESIDENCY'S REACTIONS TO THE COREU SUGGESTIONS AND THE LIMITED COMMENTARY ABOUT THEM. WE NEED TO IMPROVE THE PROCESS."

3.(C) DUTCH NEXT STEPS ON THE VISA BAN LIST ARE TO OFFER VIA COREU THE U.S.-SUGGESTED NAMES WITH THE CAVEAT THAT THEY FORESEE LITTLE LIKELY EU CONSENSUS TO EXPAND THE LIST TO INCLUDE FAMILY MEMBERS OF MILOSEVIC REGIME SENIOR OFFICIALS.

"A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE EU HAVE A PROBLEM IN PRINCIPLE WITH THIS STEP," ONE OFFICIAL DESCRIBED. ANOTHER POINTED OUT THE QUANDARY THAT PRESSURING MILOSEVIC CRONY FAMILY MEMBERS MIGHT PRESENT TO THIS DUTCH GOVERNMENT. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE CURRENT COLAITION IS QUIETLY TRYING TO FASHION A PUBLIC CONSENSUS ON THE SUITABILITY OF THE PROSPECTIVE FIANCEE TO DUTCH CROWN PRINCE WILLEM ALEXANDER, MAXIMA ZORREGUIETA, WHOSE FATHER WAS AGRICULTURE MINISTER IN THE NOTORIOUS ARGENTINIAN JUNTA REGIME OF GENERAL VILEDA. THE DUTCH ALLOWED THAT THE PARALLELS ARE NOT EXACTLY COMPARABLE, BUT THEY STILL WISH TO AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF ANY DOUBLE STANDARD. ADDITIONALLY, THE DUTCH ASKED POINTEDLY SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE LAST FEW DAYS WHETHER THE SERB OPPOSITION "WAS JUST FEEDING THE U.S. NAMES?" POLOFF NOTED THAT THE U.S. USES A BROAD NUMBER OF SOURCES, TO WHICH SEVERAL MFA OFFICERS RESPONDED WITH COMMENTS INDICATING THAT EU MEMBERS DISCOUNT OPOSITION VISA BAN CANDIDATE SUGGESTIONS HEAVILY, FEARING ENTANGLEMENT IN INTER-OPPOSITION SCORE-SETTLING.

4.(C) AS TO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SVETOZAR MILOSEVIC FROM THE RECENT EU LIST, THE DUTCH PROFESS TO BE "PUZZLED" AND "LOOKING INTO THE QUESTION." THEY DO NOT SHARE THE DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT THE INDIVIDUAL CASE AS REPORTED IN REF.D, BUT DO SEEM GENUINELY DETERMINED TO GET A PORTUGESE EXPLANATION ABOUT THE PROCESS BY WHICH MILOSEVIC WAS DROPPED.

5.(C) FINALLY, THE DUTCH SAY THAT THE UK AND THE NETHERLANDS ARE "BRAINSTORMING" ON HOW TO MANAGE ANTICIPATED CALLS TO DROP OUTHRIGHT THE EU SERBIA FLIGHT BAN WHEN THE CURRENT SIX-MONTH SUSPENSION EXPIRES IN AUGUST. MFA OFFICIALS, WHILE STRESSING THAT DUTCH-UK TALKS ARE JUST GETTING UNDERWAY, GENERALLY OBSERVED THAT A LIKELY OUTCOME OF THE FALL EU SANCTIONS REVIEW WOULD BE A DEBATE OVER "WHETHER TO JUST TO DROP THE FLIGHT BAN ALTOGETHER TO PROTECT THE FLANKS OF THE VISA BAN LIST OR FIGHT FOR ANOTHER SUSPENSION ACTION WITH THE ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION OF ITS APPROPRIATE LENGTH. HE ALSO PREDICTED THAT THERE WOULD BE PRESSURE FOR "FURTHER TARGETING, OR SPECIFYING, OF HOW THE OIL BAN SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE IMPLEMENTED.
SCHNEIDER