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## VISIT OF SOMALI DELEGATION TO ITALY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 20211

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TAGS: PDEV, PBOR, SO, ET

SUBJ: VISIT OF SOMALI DELEGATION TO ITALY

1. SUMMARY: PURPOSE OF VISIT TO ITALY BY SOMALI VICE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER, PART OF SWING THROUGH

EUROPEAN AND ARAB COUNTRIES BY SOMALI OFFICIALS, WAS TO SEEK DIPLOMATIC, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT IN

WAKE OF SOVIETS DEPARTURE. GOI URGED SOMALIS TO SEEK NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT UNDER OAU AUSPICES,

COMMENDED THEM FOR THEIR DECISION TO OUST SOVIETS, AND PROMISED TO EXAMINE POSSIBILITY OF REPLACING SOVIETS

IN TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS. END SUMMARY.

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2. SOMALI VICE PRESIDENT HUSSEIN KULMIE, ACCOMPANIED BY FOREIGN MINISTER AND PLANNING COMMISSION PRESIDENT, VISITED ROME DEC. 2-6. MFA DIRECTOR FOR

AFRICAN AFFAIRS (RACHELE) ON DEC. 7 GAVE US READOUT ON VISIT. SOMALIS DESCRIBED TO ITALIANS THEIR

"COURAGEOUS" DECISION, WITHOUT ANY ASSURANCE OF WESTERN SUPPORT, IN OUSTING SOVIETS. ACCORDING TO SOMALIS,

SOVIETS HAVE PLAN TO TAKE OVER AFRICA: THEY HAVE ETHIOPIA WITHIN THEIR GRASP AND, NOW THAT THEY HAVE

BEEN KICKED OUT OF SOMALIA, WILL TRY TO GET BACK TO BERBERA THROUGH MILITARY ACTION BY ETHIOPIAN TROOPS.

MEANWHILE, ACCORDING TO SOMALIS, SOVIET TAKEOVER IN KENYA IS ALREADY UNDER WAY. SOMALIS ARE THEREFORE

SEEKING DIPLOMATIC, MILITARY, AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT FROM ITALIANS, FROM OTHER EUROPEANS, AND FROM SYMPATHETIC ARABS.

3. ON DIPLOMATIC SIDE, ACCORDING TO RACHELE, ITALIANS

TOLD SOMALIS THAT THEY MUST BEGIN PEACE TALKS. THEY POINTED OUT THAT SOMALIS MAY NOT BE IN SO ADVANTAGEOUS

A MILITARY POSITION LATER ON (RACHELE NOTED TO US THAT, GIVEN INFIGHTING AMONG ETHIOPIAN MILITARY UNITS,

ITALIANS DO NOT FORESEE A CONCERTED SUCCESSFUL ETHIOPIAN COUNTERATTACK IN NEAR FUTURE). IF SOMALIS ARE REALLY

WORRIED ABOUT SOVIET PENETRATION OF AFRICA, ITALIANS SAID, THEIR INTEREST LIES IN SEEKING NEGOTIATIONS UNDER

AUSPICES OF OAU AS SOVIETS ARE NOT MEMBERS. AS TO KENYA, ITALIANS URGED SOMALIS TO TAKE MORE CONCRETE ACTION TO CALM KENYA FEARS. SOMALIS REPLIED THAT AS THEY ARE NOT INTERESTED IN

KENYAN TERRITORY THEY ARE WILLING TO SIGN A NON-AGRESSION TREATY BUT THAT THEY CANNOT RENOUNCE COMPLETELY

THEIR INTEREST IN SOMALIS IN KENYA.

4. ON MILITARY REQUEST, ITALIANS REITERATED THEIR CONFIDENTIAL

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POLICY OF NOT SUPPLYING MAJOR ARMS TO EITHER SIDE

DURING DURATION OF OGADEN CONFLICT. THEY CONTINUE TO GIVE SMALL ARMS AND PARAMILITARY EQUIPMENT TO POLICE.

IN ADDITION, MILITARY OFFICERS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE TRAINING IN ITALIAN INSTITUTIONS.

5. AS TO ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, ITALIANS STATED THEIR

WILLINGNESS TO SEND TECHNICAL COMMISSION TO SOMALIA TO EXAMINE POSSIBILITY OF REPLACING SOVIETS IN AID

ACTIVITIES ALREADY UNDER WAY INCLUDING HOSPITAL AND FISHERY PROJECTS. IDEA WOULD FOR ITALIAN EXPERTISE

TO BE COMBINED WITH SAUDI FUNDS TO REPLACE SOVIET PRESENCE. ITALIANS WILL ALSO SEEK WAY OF TAKING ON

MORE SOMALI STUDENTS, BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY, POSSIBLY WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF LOME CONVENTION.

6. RACHELE TOLD US THAT ITALIANS SEE SIAD

BARRE TRIP TO SAUDI ARABIA AS SERVING DUAL PURPOSE OF SEEKING FINANCIAL HELP FOR SOMALIA AND ACTING AS

MEDIATOR IN EFFORT TO BRING SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT BACK TOGETHER IN CONTEXT OF MIDDLE EAST PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS ACCORDING TO RACHELE, IS ROLE SOMALIS PLAY

WELL AND FROM WHICH THEY KNOW HOW TO EXTRACT HANDSOME PRICE.

7. AS TO RECENT TRIP BY PCI DELEGATION LED BY GIANCARLO PAJETTA TO ADDIS ABABA AND MOGADISCIO, RACHELE SAID MFA CONSIDERED IT ILL-ADVISED BUT UNDERSTOOD

THAT SOVIETS HAD URGED PAJETTA TO MAKE TRIP. WHILE SOMALIS ARE UNHAPPY ABOUT PRO-ETHIOPIAN POSITIONS TAKEN BY DELGATION,

THEY DO NOT WANT TO BREAK THEIR TIES COMPLETELY WITH EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES AS THEY WANT TO DEMONSTRATE

THAT THEY CAN RETAIN THEIR REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST

CREDENTIALS EVEN AFTER BREAK WITH MOSCOW. COMMENT: EMBASSY

BELIEVES THT ASIDE FROM MOSCOW ANGLE, OGADEN CONFLICT HAS PRESENTED PCI WITH SERIOUS FOREIGN POLICY

DILEMMA IN HAVING TO CHOOSE BETWEEN TRADITIONAL SUPPORT FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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SOMALIA AND REVOLUTIONARY REGIME IN ETHIOPIA. WHILE PAJETTA DELEGATION TOOK PRO-MENGISTU POSITION, OTHER ELEMENTS IN PARTY CON-

TINUE TOFAVOR CONTINUED TIES WITH SOMALIA.GARDNER

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