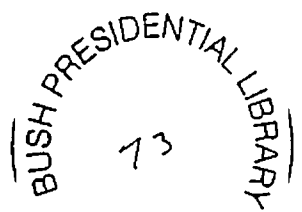


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<SUBJ> KAZAKHSTAN'S STRATEGIC SITUATION --
-- LOOKING TO THE LIBBY TALKS

<TEXT>
CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 03 ALMA ATA 000788
OSD FOR PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY LIBBY
MOSCOW ALSO FOR BGEN GOVAN
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: MCAP, PREL, PARM, ECON, KZ
SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN'S STRATEGIC SITUATION --
-- LOOKING TO THE LIBBY TALKS
1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ -- ENTIRE TEXT.

~BEGIN SUMMARY~
SUMMARY

2. LOOKING TO THE UPCOMING LIBBY-ZHUKEYEV TALKS TO COMMENCE THE U.S.-KAZAKHSTAN DEFENSE DIALOGUE, CHARGE ASKED ZHUKEYEV TO ASSESS KAZAKHSTAN'S STRATEGIC SITUATION. ZHUKEYEV SAID KAZAKHSTAN WANTED THE LEVEL OF STRATEGIC FORCES IN ITS TERRITORY TO DECLINE SO THAT THEIR COST WOULD BE REDUCED. KAZAKHSTAN PLAYED A STABILIZING ROLE IN THE REGION, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF TENSIONS AMONG OTHER STATES IN THE AREA. INTERNAL PROBLEMS WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT SECURITY CONCERNS IN THE REGION, EXACERBATED BECAUSE SOME COUNTRIES WERE NOT MOVING FAST ON ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION. BUT WITHOUT POLITICAL STABILITY ECONOMIC REFORMS COULD NOT TAKE PLACE. IN OUR VIEW, PRESSURE FROM THE OPPOSITION, BUILDING ON PUBLIC FRUSTRATION WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, MAY IN FACT SPUR KAZAKHSTAN'S AUTHORITIES TO TAKE A BOLDER APPROACH ON REFORMS. FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA, ZHUKEYEV SAID, WERE THE MOST CRITICAL FACTOR IN MAINTAINING KAZAKHSTAN'S EXTERNAL SECURITY!

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END SUMMARY.
~END SUMMARY~

INITIATING THE DEFENSE DIALOGUE

3. AT LUNCH WITH STATE COUNSELOR TULEGAN ZHUKEYEV ON JUNE 24, CHARGE ASKED FOR ZHUKEYEV'S COMMENTS ON KAZAKHSTAN'S STRATEGIC SITUATION, IN ORDER TO FACILITATE PREPARATIONS FOR THE U.S.-KAZAKHSTAN DEFENSE DIALOGUE. THE DIALOGUE WILL COMMENCE WHEN PRINCIPAL DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE LIBBY VISITS ALMA ATA IN JULY.

KAZAKHSTAN

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4. ZHUKEYEV SAID THAT KAZAKHSTAN PLAYED A STABILIZING ROLE IN THE REGION. THERE WERE TENSIONS AMONG SOME OF THE OTHER STATES IN THE REGION -- UZBEK-KYRGYZ, UZBEK-TURKMEN, UZBEK-TADJIK, AND TADJIK-KYRGYZ. KAZAKHSTAN, HOWEVER, DID NOT HAVE TENSIONS WITH THE OTHERS, AND EVEN OFFERED THEM HELP. TODAY, TADJIKISTAN AND KYRGYZSTAN SUFFERED SHORTAGES OF BREAD. KAZAKHSTAN PLANNED TO ASSIST THEM IF THE HARVEST WAS GOOD THIS YEAR. GOOD RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA AND UZBEKISTAN WERE IMPORTANT FOR KAZAKHSTAN'S ECONOMIC LINKS WITH THOSE REPUBLICS.
5. KAZAKHSTAN WOULD NOT DEMAND A LOYALTY PLEDGE FROM THE OFFICERS OF THE 40TH ARMY (WHICH HAS BEEN FORMALLY RESUBORDINATED TO KAZAKHSTAN). IN AN EVIDENT COMPARISON WITH UKRAINE'S APPROACH, ZHUKEYEV ASKED RHETORICALLY, "WHAT SORT OF GUARANTEE IS THIS?" THE MAJORITY OF OFFICERS WANTED TO STAY IN KAZAKHSTAN, WHERE THEY HAD APARTMENTS. KAZAKHSTAN WAS NOW BEGINNING THE TRANSITION TO PAYING THE 40TH ARMY'S SALARIES AND EXPENSES.
6. ASKED ABOUT KAZAKHSTAN'S FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES IN KAZAKHSTAN, ZHUKEYEV SAID THAT KAZAKHSTAN PAID SOME MONEY TO MOSCOW TO HELP SUPPORT THEM, "BUT NOT ENOUGH." KAZAKHSTAN WANTED THE LEVEL OF STRATEGIC FORCES IN KAZAKHSTAN TO DECLINE, SO THAT THEIR COST WOULD BE REDUCED. |

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INTERNAL PROBLEMS MOST IMPORTANT

7. ZHUKEYEV SAID INTERNAL PROBLEMS WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT SECURITY CONCERNS IN THE REGION. THEY WERE EXACERBATED BECAUSE SOME COUNTRIES WERE N
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OT MOVING FAST
ON ECONOMIC LIBERALIZATION. ALSO, CAPITAL FROM SAUDI ARABIA AND IRAN WERE BEING ATTRACTED TO THE REGION. THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION IN KAZAKHSTAN (COMMENT: AN APPARENT REFERENCE TO THE ETHNIC KAZAKH NATIONALIST PARTIES WHICH DEMONSTRATED LAST WEEK) DID NOT FAVOR CLOSE U.S. TIES.
8. ZHUKEYEV EMPHASIZED THAT WITHOUT POLITICAL STABILITY ECONOMIC REFORMS COULD NOT TAKE PLACE. (COMMENT: IN OUR VIEW, FURTHER PRESSURE FROM THE OPPOSITION, BUILDING ON PUBLIC FRUSTRATION WITH THE ECONOMIC CRISIS, MAY IN FACT SPUR THE REGIME TO TAKE A BOLDER APPROACH ON REFORMS.)

GREATER TURKESTAN?

9. ZHUKEYEV SCOFFED AT THE IDEA THAT SOME COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, BESIDES UZBEKISTAN, MIGHT BE ATTRACTED TO THE CONCEPT OF A "GREATER TURKESTAN," WITH TASHKENT AS THE CAPITAL. ABSENT A GREATER THREAT FROM RUSSIA OR CHINA, REGIONAL COUNTRIES WOULD WANT TO KEEP THEIR INDEPENDENCE. ZHUKEYEV THEN JOKED THAT POLAND'S ADAM MICHNIK HAD ONCE SAID THAT NATIONALISM WAS THE LAST STAGE OF COMMUNISM.

CIS

10. ZHUKEYEV SAID THE CURRENT PRIORITY FOR THE CIS WAS

TO ESTABLISH CONCRETE ECONOMIC TIES. POLITICAL
COOPERATION COULD COME LATER.

RUSSIA

11. FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA, ZHUKEYEV SAID, WERE THE MOST CRITICAL FACTOR IN MAINTAINING KAZAKHSTAN'S EXTERNAL SECURITY. ETHNIC RUSSIANS LIVED IN KAZAKHSTAN, AND THEY HAD BEEN PATRIOTS. RUTSKOY'S CALL FOR RUSSIA TO DEFEND THE INTERESTS OF RUSSIANS EVERYWHERE WAS HARMFUL. IN THIS REGARD, KAZAKHSTAN SHOULD BE CAREFUL IN THE FUTURE TO TREAT ETHNIC RUSSIANS AS FULLY EQUAL. (COMMENT: SINCE INDEPENDENCE, OFFICIAL ADVANTAGES FOR ETHNIC KAZAKHS HAVE BEEN GROWING.)

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UZBEKISTAN

13. ZHUKEYEV DESCRIBED UZBEKISTAN AS A COUNTRY WHICH HAS COTTON, OIL, AND GAS, A TRADITIONAL EASTERN SOCIETY, AND A STRONG ISLAMIC FORCE.)

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IN THE RECENT BISHKEK SUMMIT MEETING, PRESIDENT KARIMOV HAD PUSHED FOR CLOSE ECONOMIC TIES IN CENTRAL ASIA, BUT EACH COUNTRY HAD A DIFFERENT IDEA OF WHAT THIS MEANT.

ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

14. ZHUKEYEV DESCRIBED THE APPEAL OF ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM AS LESS IN KAZAKHSTAN THAN ELSEWHERE IN THE REGION. NONETHELESS, ITS APPEAL IN THE REGION WOULD
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GROW IF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS PERSISTED, BUT WANE IF THE SITUATION IMPROVED. IN THIS REGARD, ZHUKEYEV DESCRIBED

U.S. ECONOMIC SUPPORT VIA THE IMF AND WORLD BANK AS AN IMPORTANT SIGNAL.

UYGERSTAN?

15. ZHUKEYEV PREDICTED THAT CHINA WOULD NOT GIVE INDEPENDENCE TO THE UYGHERS FOR CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT UYGERSTAN. THUS, THE SIDES HAD TO LIVE AS GOOD NEIGHBORS.

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