CONFIDENTIAL

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ORIGIN OES-09

INFO OCT-00 ADS-00 SS-15 AF-10 ARA-11 EA-10 EUR-12
NEA-06 IO-14 DOE-17 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-06
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 NSCE-00
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 SIG-03 MMO-01 /143 R

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 278942

FOR AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE

E.O. 12065 RDS-3 (10/25/89)

TAGS: MNUC, PARM, ALLDP

SUBJECT: GUIDANCE ON SUSPECTED NUCLEAR EVENT

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT

2. US NEWS SOURCES REPORTED EVENING OCTOBER 25 THAT US HAS EVIDENCE OF LOW-YIELD TEST OVER A MONTH AGO OF NUCLEAR DEVICE IN REGION THAT POINTS TO SOUTH AFRICA. PRESS SOURCES INDICATE NO CONFIRMING INFORMATION HAS BEEN OBTAINED. US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE CALLED EVIDENCE AMBIGUOUS.

3. EVENING OCT 25 DEPT OF STATE ISSUED FOLLOWING STATEMENT. BEGIN TEXT: THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS AN INDICATION SUGGESTING THE POSSIBILITY THAT A LOW-YIELD CONFIDENTIAL NUCLEAR EXPLOSION OCCURRED ON SEPTEMBER 22 IN AN AREA OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND SOUTH ATLANTIC INCLUDING PORTIONS OF THE ANTARCTIC CONTINENT AND THE SOUTHERN PART OF AFRICA. NO CORROBORATING EVIDENCE HAS BEEN RECEIVED TO DATE. WE ARE CONTINUING TO ASSESS WHETHER SUCH AN EVENT TOOK PLACE. END TEXT.
4. WHERE IN THE OPINION OF THE AMBASSADOR OR CHARGE IT
WOULD BE USEFUL TO INFORM APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF
FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS, YOU MAY DRAW ON ABOVE STATEMENT

TO DO SO. IN ADDITION, YOU SHOULD EMPHASIZE THAT
EVIDENCE REMAINS AMBIGUOUS AND US GOVERNMENT CONTINUES
TO ASSESS WHETHER EVENT HAS TAKEN PLACE. US WISHES TO
AVOID CONTRIBUTING TO SENSE OF CRISIS OVER THIS ISSUE.
US GOVERNMENT HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO ASSESS THE ORIGIN OF
ANY EVENT THAT MIGHT HAVE TAKEN PLACE NOR HAS IT INDEED
BEEN ABLE TO CONFIRM THE EVENT ITSELF. WE CONTINUE
UGENTLY TO SEEK INFORMATION AND WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR
ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHICH GOVERNMENTS WOULD WISH
TO PASS ON TO US.

5. FYI. US PRESS ALSO CURRENTLY RUNNING SOUTH AFRICAN
EMBASSY WASHINGTON COMMENT THAT STORY IS PURE SPECULATION,
SOUTH ARICA HAS STATED THAT IT HAS NO INTENTION OF
EXPLODING A NUCLEAR DEVICE, BUT ADMITTED IT HAD A
PROGRAM FOR ENRICHING URANIUM. END FYI.
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