

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TECH, SA

SUBJECT: SAUDI INTEREST IN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT

REF: JIDDA 3609

1. NO RPT NO SEPARATE US-EGYPTIAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT HAS BEEN SIGNED. STATEMENT ON "PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONS AND COOPERATION BETWEEN EGYPT AND US" SIGNED IN CAIRO JUNE 14 FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S VISIT THERE MERELY STATES THAT TWO GOVERNMENTS WILL INITIATE NEGOTIATION OF AN AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION IN FIELD OF NUCLEAR ENERGY UNDER AGREED SAFEGUARDS. EGYPTIAN MINISTER OF ELECTRICITY SIGNED IN WASHINGTON ON JUNE 26 A NUCLEAR FUEL SUPPLY CONTRACT IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE FUEL AVAILABILITY IN 1980'S WHEN EGYPT HOPES TO HAVE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT. FUEL CONTRACT
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OF COURSE IS PROVISIONAL AND DEPENDENT UPON SUCCESSFUL

NEGOTIATION OF BILATERAL NUCLEAR COOPERATION AGREEMENT.

2. FOR YOUR REFERENCE AND FOR PRESENTATION TO KAAU
PRESIDENT YAMANI, TEXT OF THAT PORTION OF JUNE 14
STATEMENT DEALING WITH NUCLEAR ENERGY FOLLOWS:

QUOTE:

SINCE THE ATOMIC AGE BEGAN, NUCLEAR ENERGY HAS BEEN
VIEWED BY ALL NATIONS AS A DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD-OFFERING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEACEFUL APPLICATIONS, BUT RAISING THE

RISK OF NUCLEAR DESTRUCTION. IN ITS INTERNATIONAL
PROGRAMS OF COOPERATION, THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
HAS MADE ITS NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE TO OTHER
NATIONS UNDER SAFEGUARD CONDITIONS. IN THIS CONTEXT,
THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WILL BEGIN NEGOTIATION OF AN
AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF NUCLEAR
ENERGY UNDER AGREED SAFEGUARDS. UPON CONCLUSION OF
SUCH AN AGREEMENT, THE UNITED STATES IS PREPARED TO SELL
NUCLEAR REACTORS AND FUEL TO EGYPT, WHICH WILL MAKE
IT POSSIBLE FOR EGYPT BY THE EARLY 1980'S TO GENERATE
SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL QUANTITIES OF ELECTRIC POWER TO
SUPPORT ITS RAPIDLY GROWING DEVELOPMENT NEEDS. PENDING
CONCLUSION OF THIS AGREEMENT, THE UNITED STATES ATOMIC
ENERGY COMMISSION AND THE EGYPTIAN MINISTRY OF
ELECTRICITY WILL THIS MONTH CONCLUDE A PROVISIONAL
AGREEMENT FOR THE SALE OF NUCLEAR FUEL TO EGYPT.

3. FYI. WE HAVE EXPECTED THAT AT SOME POINT SAUDIS ARE
LIKELY TO APPROACH US FOR HELP IN NUCLEAR FIELD. WE
CONSIDER HOWEVER THAT AT THIS TIME IT WOULD BE PREMATURE
TO ENCOURAGE SAUDIS TO SEEK DEVELOP NUCLEAR ENERGY
OPTION. UNLIKE EGYPTIANS, WHO HAVE ACQUIRED SOME
EXPERIENCE IN NUCLEAR SCIENCES, SAUDIS HAVE LITTLE OR NO
BACKGROUND IN THIS FIELD. TO BEGIN NOW TO TRY TO TRAIN
AND DEVELOP SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF SAUDI NUCLEAR
SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICIANS WOULD PUT GREAT STRAIN ON
ALREADY HEAVILY TAXED SAUDI MANPOWER MANAGEMENT AND
TRAINING CAPABILITIES AND WOULD LIKELY DETRACT FROM
SATISFACTORY PROGRESS ON OTHER, MORE IMMEDIATELY
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DESIRABLE PROGRAMS. THERE ARE ALSO OBVIOUS POLITICAL
IMPLICATIONS WERE USG TO CONCLUDE EARLY AGREEMENT WITH
STILL ANOTHER ARAB COUNTRY ON NUCLEAR ENERGY,
ESPECIALLY AS SAUDIS HAVE YET TO SIGN MUCH LESS RATIFY
NPT. CONSEQUENTLY, WE HOPE YOU CAN FIND WAY TO STEER
YAMANI AND OTHERS FROM PRESSING US FOR US-SAUDI NUCLEAR
ENERGY AGREEMENT AT EARLY DATE. END FYI.

4. IN RESPONSE TO YAMANI, YOU MIGHT SUGGEST THAT QUESTION BEST BE CONSIDERED IN CONTEXT OF US-SAUDI JOINT WORKING GROUP ON TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT. LATTER COULD, AMONG OTHER TASKS, ATTEMPT TO DEVELOP FEASIBLE AND COORDINATED PLAN OF APPROACH TO THIS AND OTHER SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGN PRACTICAL PRIORITIES TO THEIR IMPLEMENTATION. BY IMPLICATION, IT COULD BE INDICATED TO YAMANI THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE NEGOTIATION OF US-SAUDI NUCLEAR AGREEMENT SHOULD HAVE

HIGH PRIORITY. INSTEAD, IT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHEN SCIENTIFIC AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS OUTLINED IN DISCUSSIONS WITH PRINCE FAHD HERE HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED AND ARE CAPABLE OF PROVIDING TECHNICALLY INFORMED SAUDI INPUT INTO SUCH NEGOTIATIONS. SISCO

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