

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 04726 081538Z

47

ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SSO-00 INRE-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 EB-07

FAA-00 DOTE-00 IOE-00 AF-08 /092 W  
----- 057138

O R 081425Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2204

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 4726

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, UG, IS

SUBJECT: PASSENGERS COMMENT ON AIR FRANCE HIJACKING

REF: (A) STATE 167095, (B) STATE 167345

1. DR. MOSHE PERES, WHO IS ABOUT TO GO TO THE U.S. FOR HIS INTERNSHIP AT A HOSPITAL IN NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT, TOLD EMBOFF JULY 8 ABOUT HIS EXPERIENCES ON HIJACKED AF FLIGHT.
2. HE SAID THAT THE PLANE WAS LEFT COMPLETELY UNGUARDED AT ATHENS AIRPORT AND THAT THE FOUR HIJACKERS RAN UP TO THE PLANE AT THE LAST MINUTE CARRYING PACKAGES, CLIMBED ON BOARD, AND LOOKED FOR SEATS. NOBODY WAS STANDING AT EITHER THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS OR AT THE PLANE ENTRANCE TO CHALLENGE THEM. THEY SIMPLY WALKED IN. HE DID NOT THINK THAT THEY EVEN HAD BOARDING PASSES. ONCE ABOARD TWO OF THE MEN STARTED TO DISTRIBUTE CANDY AND SOME DATES OUT OF A BIG METAL BOX, EVIDENTLY TO REDUCE SUSPICION AMONG SOME OF THE PASSENGERS. DR. PERES FELT THAT EVERYTHING HAD BEEN  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 04726 081538Z

EXTREMELY LAX AND SUSPECTED THAT SOMEONE AT THE ATHENS

AIRPORT MUST HAVE BEEN WORKING WITH THE HIJACKERS; OTHERWISE, HOW COULD THEY HAVE GOTTEN ON TO THE RAMP? HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE DOOR OF THE PILOT'S CABIN WAS OPEN DURING THE FLIGHT, ENABLING THE HIJACKERS TO RUSH IN WITHOUT GIVING HIM TIME TO PUSH THE HIJACK WARNING BUTTON.

3. AS FAR AS HIS EXPERIENCE IN ENTEBBE WAS CONCERNED, DR. PERES CONFIRMED STORIES ALREADY REPORTED IN THE PRESS, THAT UGANDAN TROOPS LINED UP FORMING PASSAGE FOR PASSENGERS GETTING OFF. AT THAT TIME HIJACKERS WERE RELAXED TALKING, GREETING FRIENDS, BUT WITHOUT HOLDING ANY WEAPONS IN THEIR HANDS. PASSENGERS WERE MADE TO BELIEVE THAT THE FLIGHT WOULD RESUME IN A FEW HOURS AFTER REFUELING. THIS WAS AN OBVIOUS DECEPTION. AMIN WAS ASKED BY SOME PASSENGERS WHY HE DID NOT FREE THEM, BUT HE CLAIMED THAT THIS WAS IMPOSSIBLE BECAUSE HIJACKERS HAD MINED THE BUILDING WITH EXPLOSIVES. AS EVIDENCE THAT UGANDANS MAY HAVE HAD FOREKNOWLEDGE OF PLANE'S ARRIVAL, DR. PERES CLAIMED THAT FOOD HAD BEEN PREPARED AS WELL AS TEMPORARY REST FACILITIES, AND THAT A UGANDAN DOCTOR AND TWO NURSES WERE STANDING BY TO GIVE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE. MOREOVER, UGANDAN TROOPS APPEARED TO PROVIDE THE PRINCIPAL GUARD OVER THE PASSENGERS. DURING THE FIRST NIGHT THERE WERE NO TERRORISTS IN SIGHT, AS UGANDAN TROOPS TOOK OVER WATCH DUTY, IN ORDER TO GIVE HIJACKERS AN OPPORTUNITY TO REST.

4. DURING THE COURSE OF THE FLIGHT ONE OF THE HIJACKERS HAD TOLD DR. PERES THAT HIS GROUP HAD BEEN 72 HOURS WITHOUT SLEEP PRIOR TO BOARDING THE PLANE AND THAT BOTH ATHENS AND THE AIR FRANCE FLIGHT HAD BEEN CAREFULLY EARMARKED FOR THEIR OPERATION WHOSE CODE NAME WAS "HAIFA", REFERRING TO THE BIRTHPLACE OF ONE OF THE PALESTINIANS AMONG THE HIJACKERS.

5. BRIEFLY COMMENTING ON THE RESCUE OPERATION, DR. PERES SAID THAT AT THE TIME TWO TERRORISTS WERE GUARDING THE PASSENGERS. WHEN THE ISRAELIS LANDED THE GUARDS WERE COMPLETELY SURPRISED AND BEGAN SHOOTING AT THE INVADERS. HAD THEY TURNED THEIR GUNS ON THE PASSENGERS FIRST, THE OPERATION COULD HAVE ENDED IN A BLOODBATH.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 04726 081538Z

6. IN CONVERSATION WITH CONOFF JULY 8, URI DAVIDSON, AN ARTICULATE AND WELL-INFORMED ISRAELI ENGINEER, WHO WAS AMONG HOSTAGES IN ENTEBBE, CORROBORATED STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO PILOT OF AIR FRANCE PLANE THAT UGANDAN TROOPS DID NOT RPT NOT REPLACE HIJACKERS AS GUARDS. DAVIDSON, WHO IS A RESERVE OFFICER IN THE IDF, STATED THAT PRESENCE OF UGANDAN TROOPS MADE HIJACKERS' TASK CONSIDERABLY EASIER BUT, TO THE BEST

OF HIS KNOWLEDGE, HIJACKERS DID NOT COMPLETELY TURN OVER  
GUARD DUTIES TO THE UGANDANS. NEVERTHELESS, DAVIDSON STATED  
THAT UGANDAN COLLABORATION WITH HIJACKERS WAS OTHERWISE  
COMPLETE AND ENTHUSIASTIC.  
TOON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AIRCRAFT HIJACKING, ARMED FORCES, HOSTAGES, TERRORISTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 08 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976TELAV04726  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760263-0727  
**From:** TEL AVIV  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760777/aaaacpus.tel  
**Line Count:** 120  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION IO  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 STATE 167095, 76 STATE 167345  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 23 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <23 APR 2004 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <16 AUG 2004 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PASSENGERS COMMENT ON AIR FRANCE HIJACKING  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINS, UG, IS, AIR FRANCE  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006