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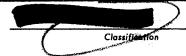
E.O. 12958, as amended
October 11, 2007 Department of State

TELEGRAM

POL-1 MALDIVES

ACTION TAKEN:

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TO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1231

ECON

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 288577

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR. MV

SUBJECT: U.S. POLICY TOWARD THE MALDIVES

REF: COLOMBO 3716

DEPARTMENT CONCURS WITH POST'S ASSESSMENT THAT U.S. INTERESTS, THOUGH SMALL, ARE WORTH SOME POSITIVE ATTENTION. WE HAVE NO WISH TO SUSTAIN MORE THAN A MINIMAL PROFILE THER BUT WE SHARE EMBASSY'S CONVICTION THAT EVEN A LIMITED PRESENCE CAN BE BENEFICIAL TO U.S. INTERESTS. FACT THAT MALDIVES WAS ONLY SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRY TO SUPPORT US ACROSS THE BOARD ON THE KOREAN ISSUE IN THE UNGA DEMONSTRATED GOM INDEPENDENCE AND THE UTILITY OF DEVELOPING A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MALDIVES. WE ARE ALSO AWARE THAT IN THE WAKE OF THE BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM GAN, THE GOM MAY SEEK TO EXPAND ITS INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS AND EXPOSURE (PARTICULARLY IN THE U.N.). IN THIS CONTEXT WE BELIEVE POST'S RECOMMENDATIONS IN SUPPORT OF OUR INTERESTS TO BE TIMELY, REASONABLE AND REALISTIC AND WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO IMPLEMENT THEM WHERE POSSIBLE. COMMENTS FOLLOW SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS IN REFTEL.

2. AUB STUDY GRANTS - ALTHOUGH CURRENT SITUATION IN LEBANON OBVIOUSLY MUST BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT AID INTENDS TO CON-

TINUE MAKING PARTICIPANT GRANTS AVAILABLE TO MALDIVIAN STUDENTS. THERE IS NO SPECIFIC CEILING ON THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS FROM THE MALDIVES RECEIVING SUCH GRANTS, BUT FOR BUDGET AND PLANNING PURPOSES WE ACCEPT YOUR RECOMMENDATION TO THINK IN TERMS OF APPROXIMATELY FIVE SCHOLARSHIPS PER YEAR. FYI - SHOULD THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AGREE WE COULD ALSO USE OUR RUPEE HOLDINGS TO FINANCE THIRD COUNTRY GRANTS IN INDIA. MALDIVES WOULD BE NATURAL CANDIDATE. END FYI.

3. CIVIL AVIATION TRAINING - WE ASSUME THAT MALDIVIAN FORM FS-INTEREST IN CIVIL AVIATION TRAINING IS RELATED TO PRESENCE OF UNDER

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INTEREST IN CIVIL AVIATION TRAINING IS RELATED TO PRESENCE OF UNDP - SPONSORED CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY CENTER IN BEIRUT WHICH SPECIALIZES IN TRAINING STUDENTS FROM LDCS. CIVIL AVIATION IS NOT AMONG AID'S CONGRESSIONALLY MANDATED PRIORITY FIELDS, NOR DO EITHER FAA OR CAB FUND TRAINING PROGRAMS IN THIS FIELD. ICAO WHICH ADMINISTERS GASC WOULD BE LOGICAL SOURCE OF SUPPORT FOR A CIVIL AVIATION STUDENT.

- 4. U.S. NAVY SHIP VISIT EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATION ACCORD GENERALLY WITH CURRENT PRACTICE WHEREBY AMBASSADOR HAS TRAVELLED TO MALDIVES IN 1974 AND 1975 ON BOARD U.S. NAVY SHIP. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THIS MAY NOT ALWAYS BE FEASIBLE, HOWEVER, AND NAVY WELCOMES POST'S INTEREST IN A YEARLY VISIT. AS IN PAST ANY SPECIFC DECISIONS ON VISITS WILL BE COORDINATED WITH EMBASSY COLOMBO.
- 5. INTERNATIONAL VISITORS PROGRAM DEPARTMENT IS PREPARED TO ESTABLISH A SEPARATE IV PROGRAM FOR THE MALDIVES AT LEVEL OF ONE GRANT PER YEAR AS SUGGESTED. IF SUITABLE CANDIDATE CAN BE PROPOSED WE ARE PREPARED TO PROGRAM A GRANTEE IN FY 76.
- 6. SEPARATE USIS PROGRAM ANTICIPATED BUDGETARY CONSTRAIN PRECLUDE ESTABLISHING A SEPARATE USIS PROGRAM FOR THE MALD IVES OR AUGMENTING USIS SRI LANKA'S BUDGET FOR THIS PURPOS AT PRESENT. HOWEVER, WE CONCUR IN REFTEL'S SUGGESTION THAT PAO TRAVEL TO MALE TO SURVEY POTENTIAL AUDIENCES AND ESTIMATE PROGRAM NEEDS AND PREPARE SECTION ON PROPOSED PROGRAMMING IN MALDIVES FOR INCLUSION IN SRI LANKA CPP. ON RECEIPT OF DETAILED PROGRAM PROPOSAL AGENCY WILL DETERMIN EXTENT TO WHICH THE POST MAY BE AUTHORIZED A MODEST DIVERSION OF FUNDS AND RESOURCES FOR THIS PURPOSE FROM THE EXISTING USIS SRI LANKA PROGRAM.
- 7. FYI: THIS WOULD NOT BE AN UNUSUAL PROCEDURE AS THERE ARE A NUMBER OF USIS POSTS USING OWN BUDGET AND RESOURCES TO PROGRAM IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES WHERE THERE ARE NO USIS ESTABLISHMENTS (E.G. TRINIDAD PROGRAM COVERS BARBADOS AND GRANADA; GEORGETOWN COVERS SURINAM). THERE ARE ALSO SEVERAL OTHER SMALL COUNTRIES IN WHICH USIS HAS NOT AND DOES NOT PLAN TO ESTABLISH ANY USIS PROGRAMS, PRIMARILY FOR BUDGETARY REASONS (E.G. BAHAMAS, SAO TOME-PRINCIPE, SEYCHELLES, COMOROS, CAPE VERDE ISLANDS). END FYI.

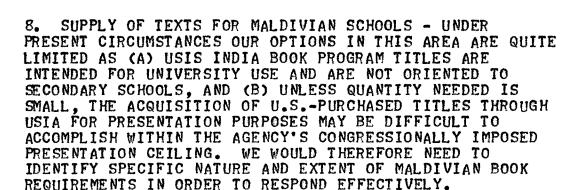
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- 9. UPGRADING OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM SINCE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR GARDINER DISCUSSED THIS SUBJECT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO COLOMBO, WE WILL AWAIT HIS RETURN TO AID/W BEFORE COMMENTING ON POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE IN THIS AREA. WE WILL PROVIDE SEPTEL ON THIS SUBJECT ASAP.
- 10. COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITIES WE WILL CONTINUE TO WATCH FOR COMMERCIAL AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PUBLICIZE THEM IN REGULAR USG CHANNELS.
- 11. POST IS CORRECT IN WISHING TO INFORM GOM THAT THERE IS NO AID PROGRAM UNDER WHICH USG CAN PROVIDE AIRCRAFT IN RESPONSE TO MALDIVIAN REQUEST FOR SUCH ASSISTANCE. INGERSOLL R

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