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**MEMCON**

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of the ANC, South Africa, on October 5, 1990 (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Nelson Mandela, Deputy President of the ANC  
Notetaker: Robert C. Frasure

DATE, TIME: October 5, 1990, 10:10 - 10:21 am EST  
LOCATION: The Oval Office

The President telephoned Nelson Mandela to give him an overview of the de Klerk visit. (U)

The President: I told you I will report back to you after my meeting with de Klerk. I am not sure how long it will take to do so up to now. We had the intervenin... and we have been caught up in a bu... how am I getting back to you. (U)

*not H.S.*

Mr. Mandela: That's very much for calling. (U)

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We did talk about the violence. We are very concerned about it. I stressed to him that the government has a special responsibility to maintain order. (U)

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8/21/2009  
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The President telephoned Nelson Mandela to give him an overview of the de Klerk visit. (U)

The President: I told you I would report back to you after my meeting with de Klerk. I apologize for not having done so up to now. We had the intervening problem of the UN meetings and we have been caught up in a budget battle back here. Only now am I getting back to you. (U)

Mr. Mandela: That's very understandable. Thank you very much for calling. (U)

The President: Let me make a few points. (U)

Mr. Mandela: You are welcome. (U)

The President: I found President de Klerk to be a decent man, a man of integrity, as you said he is. He gave me the impression of someone trying to do the right thing but with many problems. (U)

I offered to play any useful role in this process. I didn't push it. But if there is some role, we want to help, despite the fact we are half way around the world. We have no colonial past. I told de Klerk as I told you to pick up the phone, if he needs me. (U)

We did talk about the violence. We are very concerned about it. I stressed to him that the government has a special responsibility to maintain order. (U)

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Sanctions were peripheral to our discussions. But they did come up. I told de Klerk that the conditions in our law are pretty specific. Only when they are met and in consultation with Congress will we lift sanctions. There is some small sentiment in Congress to increase sanctions but I won't do that. (S)

In my departure statement, I did use the word irreversible to describe the process. It was based on my conviction that we want it to be so. I understand that it may have caused some consternation or misunderstanding with you. I hope I'm right in saying it. They cannot go back to old style apartheid. What comes next is the real question. (S)

There was some reference by de Klerk to one man, one vote with constitutional guarantees. (S)

There we are. (U)

We met for about three hours. We went over and had lunch together. (U)

I came away impressed by the man. (S)

Mr. Mandela: Thank you very much. I appreciate it very much. (U)

It is true that the word irreversible is not one to which we subscribe. I have no doubt about the integrity of Mr. de Klerk. I'm happy you had that same impression. (S)

When we say we have reservations about the word irreversible, it is not referring to you. We are indicating it is not our perception. (S)

The President: Are you worried that it might go back? (S)

Mr. Mandela: It will be irreversible when there is an agreement on a constitution. (S)

The President: So it is a question of timing then? (S)

Mr. Mandela: Yes. Maybe, however, the mutual trust between the two sides may become so strong that a mere mutual declaration is enough. That is my personal point of view. (S)

The President: I was trying to be encouraging on it. (S)

Mr. Mandela: It is not an important point between us. I wanted to clarify it. But it is a thing of the past between us. (S)

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The President: It shows the need to stay in touch like this. We cannot let misunderstandings develop. I thank you for your frankness. (Ø)

Is your health okay now? (U)

Mr. Mandela: Yes. And I'm looking forward to my trip. I get more sleep when I travel. (U)

The President: I feel the same way. (U)

Mr. Mandela: I raised one problem with Ambassador Swing that I want to mention to you. I urged him to help us find a way of securing premises for our organization, of getting a building. We are consuming our capital on rent. We need help. (Ø)

The President: I've been tied up on the budget and other issues and haven't seen that. I will ask my National Security staff to look into it. I'm delighted that you raised it. (Ø)

Mr. Mandela: Thank you, Mr. President. My best wishes to your wife and family. (U)

The President: The same to you. It was good talking to you. Goodby, Sir. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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