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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with UN Secretary  
General Boutros Boutros-Ghali

PARTICIPANTS: The President  
Boutros Boutros-Ghali  
Interpreter: None  
Notetaker: John M. Ordway

DATE, TIME December 8, 1992, 12:22 - 12:29 p.m.  
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Boutros, is that you? How are you, sir? (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: Very good, thank you, Mr. President. (U)

The President: I just wanted to call you and thank you again for your work to get through the resolution on Somalia. I also wanted to report on a call I just had about two hours ago with Robert Oakley. Do you know him? (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: Yes, Mr. President, I do. I spent about two hours with him. He is having good cooperation with Ambassador Kittani in Addis Ababa and in Mogadishu. (Ø)

The President: It is important to get that good cooperation. Ismat Kittani and I go back a long way. You have a good man there. (Ø)

I wanted to get in touch with you because of the phone call with Oakley. He was quite upbeat on the press, on the NGOs, and on cooperation from the warlords with him and Kittani, and with each other. (Ø)

I just wanted to share this with you, because I am sure that you worry about the situation, like I do. (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: Thank you very much, Mr. President. It is very important. You will go down in history as the initiator of the first humanitarian intervention in history. This is very important for the world community, and for the United Nations. I am getting lots of letters from presidents and foreign ministers. I just got one from the foreign minister of Namibia, from Mauritania, from President Gouled of Djibouti. I have lots of messages thanking the UN for the work we are doing there. (Ø)

I am sure this will be a success. It will be important for Africa, and for the international community. (U)

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The President: We'll keep you informed. We have quite a big force going in there. I don't want any of them to be killed. I hope there will be no confrontations. We are not going in for a fight, but hope there will be understanding in the world community if we do what we have to do to protect the mission. They are going in a very open way. I worry that a hopped-up kid with one of these Toyotas may shoot at the Marines, and there will be consequences. (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: Disarming of the gangs, and of the heavy weapons, will be important. If you can give some compensation for the weapons, it might help. As long as they have arms, we will not have peace. (Ø)

The President: I agree it is important. But we have not made it part of our mission statement. The world may turn on us if we don't do what we said we would do. We need peacekeepers coming in quickly behind us. (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: I agree. (U)

The second idea concerns concentrating the effort on the south. You know, we have the same situation in the north in Berbera and Hargeysa. The situation there is worse than the south. We have not even been able to get in. I mentioned this to the military team that came to brief me, which agreed that the second step must reach the north. (Ø)

The President: We have talked to your people and will keep this under consideration for whatever steps are needed. (Ø)

Will you be around for the holidays, or are you going home? (U)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: No, I am going to Somalia at the beginning of the year and will have a conference in Addis Ababa with the Somali leaders. I want to show the division of labor, with the UN doing the humanitarian and reconciliation aspects. I hope to be in Addis Ababa at the beginning of the year to see if we can have a preparatory meeting. (Ø)

The President: Will this be under OAU auspices? (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: No, it will be a UN meeting, but in cooperation with the OAU and other organizations. (Ø)

The President: We have an interest in keeping Africans on board. We have a lot of African-Americans here. But I was also concerned that the Africans would understand what we are doing in Somalia. (Ø)

UNSYG Boutros-Ghali: No, Mr. President, you have a lot of support. You have Nigeria, Egypt, Morocco, Senegal -- you have real support from African countries. (Ø)

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I also hope to be in Geneva in January to look at the Bosnian situation. I want to make sure that we don't give the impression that we are ignoring the situation there. (S)

The President: I'd like to talk to you about Bosnia at some point. (S)

-- End of Conversation --

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