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FOCAB 002/12

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELNO RETRACT 102
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FOR FCO NEWS DEPT - ATTN COLLIS
FCO ID - ATTN EDMONDS BROWN
NO TEN PRESS OFFICE - ATTN MURRAY

ITEM: WIDE-RANGING HOWE-HALEFOGLU TALKS IN ANKARA.
BY GARY HICKS, LPS CHIEF DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

ANKARA (LPS): WIDE-RANGING TALKS LASTING NEARLY THREE HOURS WERE HELD BETWEEN THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE, AND THE TURKISH FOREIGN MINISTER MR VAHIT HALEFOGLU HERE TODAY (TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY) ON THE SECOND DAY OF SIR GEOFFREY'S VISIT TO TURKEY, BRITISH SOURCES AFTERWARDS DESCRIBED THE DISCUSSION AS 'FRIENDLY, USEFUL AND SUBSTANTIAL.'

THE 'TETE A TETE', DUE TO LAST 10 MINUTES, CONTINUED FOR TWO HOURS. SIR GEOFFREY VOICED HIS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE JANUARY HIGH LEVEL TALKS ON CYPRUS HAD NOT SUCCEEDED AND THANKED HIS HOST FOR THE ROLE TURKEY CONTINUES TO PLAY IN THE ISSUE. HE ALSO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF NOT LETTING SLIP THE OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED BY THE UN GENERAL SECRETARY PEREZ DE CUELLAR'S INITIATIVE.

MR HALEFOGLU, AGREEING IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP THE DIALOGUE GOING, SAID HE SUPPORTED THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S EFFORTS. FOR IF THERE WERE TO BE A SOLUTION IT MUST BE BY DIRECT CONTACT BETWEEN THE PARTIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED.

THEY DISCUSSED ALSO TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE REST OF EUROPE, PARTICULARLY THE TEN-NATION EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. SIR GEOFFREY SAID HIS COUNTRY WANTED TO SEE SUPPORT FOR CLOSER EC-TURKISH COOPERATION, REFLECTING PROGRESS MADE IN TURKEY TOWARD DEMOCRACY. AND HE RECALLED BRITISH ATTEMPTS TO GET THE QUESTION OF AID TO TURKEY UNBLOCKED. MR HALEFOGLU REPLIED THAT HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR BRITISH GOVERNMENT HELP IN THE EC AND ALSO FOR THE SUPPORT LENT BY BRITISH PARLIAMENTARIANS. HE MADE IT PLAIN THAT HE WAS ANXIOUS TO RESOLVE OUTSTANDING ISSUES ARISING FROM TURKEY'S TREATY OF ASSOCIATION WITH THE COMMUNITY.

AFTER SIR GEOFFREY HAD MENTIONED EC PUBLIC OPINION OVER THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN TURKEY AS ONE FACTOR IN THE ISSUE, IT WAS STRESSED THAT TURKEY WAS MAKING AS RAPID PROGRESS AS POSSIBLE AND THAT MANY OF THE CRITICISMS WERE MISINFORMED.

THE 50-MINUTE PLENARY SESSION, INVOLVING OFFICIALS, REVIEWED THE IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT, THE MIDDLE EAST AND EAST-WEST RELATIONS. ON IRAN-IRAQ, AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED, BOTH SIDES AGREED ON THE NEED TO END THE LONG WAR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

DISCUSSING THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY SAID IF ISRAEL WITHDREW ON 18 FEBRUARY AS INTENDED, THE MOVE SHOULD NOT LEAD TO DISORDER. HE THOUGHT THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL) HAD A ROLE TO PLAY.

ON THE BROADER ARAB-ISRAEL ISSUE. MR HALEFOGLU SAID THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM WAS THE KEY. VIEWS WERE EXCHANGED ON THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION ORGANISATION'S (PLO) RELATIONS WITH KING HUSSEIN OF JORDAN AND PRESIDENT MUBARAK OF EGYPT.

ON EAST-WEST RELATIONS, SIR GEOFFREY REITERATED WELL-KNOWN BRITISH POSITIONS ON THE US-USSR GENEVA TALKS DUE TO START IN MARCH, AGAIN DESCRIBING THEM AS 'THE BEGINNING OF THE BEGINNING'. HE ALSO GAVE AN ACCOUNT OF HIS VISIT TO BUCHAREST AND SOFIA, INCLUDING THE ISSUE OF ETHNIC TURKS IN BULGARIA WHICH HAD COME UP IN HIS TALKS WITH WITH BULGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER MLADENOV.

AS REQUESTED, HE CONVEYED TO MR HALEFOGLU THE CONCERN EXPRESSED BY MR MLADENOV FOR THE CONTINUATION OF GOOD TURKISH-BULGARIAN RELATIONS (LPS)

ENDS

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