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 RUQMKM/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 2683
 RUQMDI/AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO 4400
 RUQMNI/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 8377
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 S E C R E T ADDIS ABABA 7985

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LINDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
 TAGS: PFOR
 SUBJECT: TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH EPMG

THIS IS A TWIST ON THE TRADITIONAL "AS I LEAVE MY POST" MESSAGE. OMITTING MOST BACKGROUND FACTS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS, IT SUGGESTS SOME TECHNIQUES FOR DEALING WITH THIS DIFFICULT GOVERNMENT. CHANGES IN STYLE OR STRUCTURE OF EPMG COULD QUICKLY MAKE SUCH ADVICE OBSOLETE, BUT IT MAY BE USEFUL TO DEPT SO LONG AS CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES CONTINUE.

1. ALTHOUGH NOT WRITTEN INTO ANY WASHINGTON-APPROVED DOCUMENT, I BELIEVE THAT NAME OF THE GAME HERE IS TO LIMIT DAMAGE TO U.S. INTERESTS, AND TO MAINTAIN AS MUCH STEADINESS AS POSSIBLE IN U.S. POLICY AND PROGRAMS.
2. WE HAVE SEEN THAT LOWER-LEVEL EPMG DECISIONS ADVERSE TO U.S. PROGRAMS CAN SOMETIMES BE REVERSED WHEN BROUGHT FORCEFULLY TO HIGHER-LEVEL ATTENTION IN THE EPMG.
3. IN THE PAST THE EMBASSY (INCLUDING MYSELF) SOMETIMES SURMISED WRONGLY THAT ADVERSE EPMG ACTIONS ARE RESULT OF CONSIDERED POLICY DECISIONS BY DIRG. IT IS INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT DISORGANIZED HIGHER LEVEL DECISION-MAKERS ARE OFTEN UNAWARE OF ACTIONS TAKEN, AND/OR ARE TOO BUSY AND TOO IGNORANT TO CONSIDER EFFECTS ON RELATIONS WITH USG. OTHER LOWER-LEVEL DECISIONS ARE SOMETIMES MADE ON THE ASSUMPTION (DERIVED IN PART FROM TONE OF MEDIA) THAT IN PRESENT LEFTIST ATMOSPHERE IT IS SAFER TO VETO OR OBSTRUCT U.S. PROGRAMS THAN TO APPROVE THEM. STILL OTHER ADVERSE ACTIONS ARE TAKEN BY SOME ETHIOPIANS WHO ARE SOLIDLY IN SOVIET CAMP (PERHAPS AS PAID AGENTS) AND ACTIVELY WORK TO DAMAGE US-EPMG RELATIONS. MISSION'S DUTY IS TO ENSURE THAT APPROPRIATE HIGH LEVELS OF EPMG (A) ARE AWARE WHAT SUBORDINATES ARE DOING, AND (B) CONSIDER CONSEQUENCES.
4. NORMAL DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE DOES NOT PRODUCE DESIRED EFFECTS ON HARD-NOSED ETHIOPIANS. BLUNTNESS IS ESSENTIAL, INCLUDING HARSH QUESTIONS ("HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ANNOUNCED POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT?" AND "WHY ARE YOU UNWILLING TO STATE PUBLICLY WHAT YOU SAY PRIVATELY ABOUT YOUR DESIRE FOR CONTINUED FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH USG?"). HOWEVER IT IS IMPORTANT TO AVOID THREATS OF CESSATION OF U.S. ASSISTANCE, AND TO USE INSTEAD THE FORMULA: "BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE BOUND TO BE AFFECTED." AN ESPECIALLY DISTASTEFUL CHARACTERISTIC OF EPMG IS ITS READINESS TO TELL FLAT LIES WHEN PRESSED ABOUT SITUATIONS IT DOES NOT WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE.

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HEAD OF STATE AND OTHERS HAVE LIED TO ME DIRECTLY, DENYING ANY DISCUSSION IN DIRG OF EXECUTING POLITICAL PRISONERS, DENYING ANY EPMG PLANS OR ACTIONS TO PREPARE FOR "RED MARCH" IN ERITREA, DENYING ANY GOVT DIRECTIVES PROMOTING ANTI-US HOSTILITY IN MEDIA OR CURTAILING TRAVEL TO U.S. THE DENIALS ARE NOT REALLY MEANT TO BE BELIEVED BUT ARE INSTEAD A MEANS OF CURTAILING DISCUSSION OF SUBJECTS THEY DO NOT WISH TO EXPLAIN. ALL I CAN THINK OF TO DO IN SUCH SITUATIONS IS TO INDICATE POLITE SCEPTICISM, AND WHERE APPROPRIATE, AS ON MEDIA HOSTILITY, POINT OUT THAT LOWER LEVEL OFFICIALS ARE NOT FOLLOWING EXPRESSED EPMG POLICY OF FRIENDSHIP WITH U.S. AND SHOULD BE MADE TO CHANGE MEDIA SLANT.

5. WE HAVE HERETOFORE HELD VERY CLOSELY OUR HIGH LEVEL REMONSTRANCES. I NOW THINK IT IS NECESSARY TO LET A LARGE NUMBER OF EPMG OFFICIALS KNOW OF OUR COMPLAINTS. WE HAVE GOOD EVIDENCE THAT USG DISSATISFACTIONS ARE CLOSELY HELD WITHIN DIRG AND AMONG MINISTERS. FACT THAT CHIEF OF MISSION HAS COMPLAINED STRONGLY TO DIRG ABOUT BILATERAL PROBLEMS IS TOO OFTEN UNKNOWN TO IMPORTANT GOVT OFFICIALS BECAUSE TOP DIRG MEMBERS ARE AFRAID OF STIMULATING INTERNAL CRITICISMS OF THEIR PAST ACTIONS. EMBASSY SHOULD CAREFULLY AND PRIVATELY SPREAD WORD TO SELECTED OFFICIALS AFTER EACH SUCH DEMARCHE.

6. ANOTHER UNDIPLOMATIC BUT NECESSARY ACTIVITY IS TO GIVE WARNINGS TO EPMG CONCERNING CERTAIN DRASTIC AND DESTRUCTIVE ACTIONS THAT INTELL REPORTS INDICATE DIRG IS CONTEMPLATING. EMBASSY SUGGESTED AND GOTTEN DEPT APPROVAL FOR SEVERAL SUCH "DON'T STICK BEANS UP YOUR NOSE" DEMARCHES INCLUDING: PROPOSED EXECUTION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, PLANS FOR "RED MARCH" ON ERITREA, AND IDEAS FOR PREEMPTIVE ATTACK ON SOMALIA. EMBASSY AND DEPT SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE ALERT TO SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE SUCH WARNINGS, BEFORE THE EVENTS OCCUR.

7. EMBASSY AND DEPT NEED CONTINUING VIGILANCE TO ENSURE THAT USG ELEMENTS, IN EMBASSY AND IN WASHINGTON. DO NOT OVERREACT OR PREMATURELY REACT AGAINST UNPALATABLE EPMG ACTIONS. IT IS TEMPTING TO SOME TO ASSUME THAT EPMG ACTIONS AGAINST USG INTERESTS, OR THAT ARE DESTRUCTIVE TO USG PROGRAMS, ARE DELIBERATELY CONSIDERED POLICY ACTS THAT WILL CONTINUE AND INTENSIFY. FROM SUCH ASSUMPTIONS IT IS POSSIBLE TO BUILD SCENARIOS THAT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE USG RETALIATION OR DISENGAGEMENT. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT WE CANNOT IGNORE PRESISTENT EPMG INATTENTION TO PROBLEMS IMPORTANT TO USG, AND/OR ACTIONS DESTRUCTIVE TO USG PROGRAMS, AND THAT SOMETIMES U.S. COUNTER-REACTION IS NECESSARY. HOWEVER, UNDERSTANDABLE IRRITATION AND DISCOURAGEMENT AMONG USG ELEMENTS AS PET PROGRAMS ARE CURTAILED OR RESHAPED BY EPMG DECISIONS CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO OVERRIDE LONGER-TERM POLICY CONSIDERATIONS. I HOPE THAT NSSM DELIBERATIONS NOW GOING ON IN WASHINGTON WILL PRODUCE WRITTEN POLICY GUIDELINES THAT WILL EMPHASIZE HIGH PRIORITY OF HANGING IN HERE AS LONG AS WE DECENTLY CAN, LIMITING DAMAGE BY REPEATING REPRESENTATIONS OF USG POINT OF VIEW, AND CONTINUING THE PRESENT POLICY OF STEADINESS.

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8. THE TIME MAY COME WHEN OVERALL US-EMPG RELATIONS ARE SO INTOLERABLE POOR THAT SHARP USG RETALIATION IS REQUIRED. PERHAPS INHUMANE ACTIONS AGAINST LOCAL CITIZENS, OR MILITARY ATTACKS AGAINST ETHIOPIA'S NEIGHBORS, COULD REQUIRE A FULL-SCALE RE-ASSESSMENT OF U.S. POLICIES AND PROGRAMS. UNTIL SUCH EVENTS OCCUR IT WOULD BE WRONG TO CHANGE PRESENT U.S. POLICIES. I FOR ONE BELIEVE THAT HOWEVER IRRATIONAL AND PRO-COMMUNIST THE EPMG MAY APPEAR AT PRESENT, IT IS NOT SUICIDAL AND IT WILL FACE UP TO HARD FACTS. ONE SUCH FACT THAT IS GETTING INCREASING EPMG ATTENTION IS THAT BOTH SOVIET BLOC AND PRC ARE FAILING TO SUPPLY INPUTS (MILITARY AND ECONOMIC) ANYWHERE NEAR THE MAGNITUDE OF THOSE FROM THE WEST. EVERY EDUCATED ETHIOPIAN, WHETHER LEFT-IDEOLOGUE OR MODERATE, UNDERSTANDS THAT VERY LARGE FOREIGN INPUTS ARE REQUIRED JUST FOR SURVIVAL, LET ALONE FOR DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESS. HAVING DEMONSTRABLY FAILED TO GET THOSE INPUTS FROM SOCIALIST FRIENDS, THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THEY WILL CONCLUDE THAT A MORE GENUINE, AND MORE TOLERABLE, NON-ALIGNMENT IS NECESSARY FOR ETHIOPIA.
HUMMEL

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