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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Colin L. Powell, Assistant to the President
 for National Security Affairs
 Nelson C. Ledsky, NSC Staff (Notetaker)

Ambassador Yury Dubinin, Soviet Embassy
 Second Secretary Yevgeny Zolotov,
 Soviet Embassy (Interpreter)

DATE, TIME April 29, 1988, 4:15 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 AND PLACE: General Powell's Office

In escorting the Soviet Ambassador to his office, General Powell introduced the Soviet visitors to Major Higgins who the General described as the wife of the US Colonel who had been kidnapped by terrorists in Lebanon. When the visitors sat down in General Powell's office, they were shown pictures of the Colonel taken before he was kidnapped and after he had been in captivity for two months. The contrast between the two pictures was startling. General Powell recalled that the Colonel had been serving with UN forces when he had been kidnapped.

The Soviet Ambassador replied that Mrs. Higgins looked like an extremely strong woman and commented that kidnappings such as this were terrible events. The Soviet Ambassador then asked what the travel plans of General Powell were. General Powell replied that he would be going to Geneva on the 11th or 12th, but otherwise would be in Washington, except for a speech next weekend in South Carolina.

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Dubin then expressed his appreciation that General Powell could see him this afternoon and said that the purpose of the call was to see if the United States had a concept of the President's visit to Moscow. Dubin said it was simply easier to plan for the visit if one knew what one's guest wanted or expected. Both sides clearly want the visit to be a success, therefore as much advance planning and exchange of information could only work to our mutual advantage.

General Powell said that he could assure the Soviet Ambassador that the President looked forward very much to going to Moscow. The President saw no major problems on the horizon. He was coming to Moscow to learn about the Soviet Union and about its people. He planned to conduct discussions in a nonconfrontational manner. The issues to be discussed would be no surprise. We had our four-part agenda, and the President expected to go through it much as we had in Washington last December. We have seen the recent Soviet reactions to the President's recent speeches. We think these reactions are exaggerated, and we would like to move on and get this all behind us. There is no intention on our part to have a confrontation in Moscow or to do anything to embarrass the General Secretary. Our hope is that the same spirit will prevail in Moscow as had occurred in Washington. All of us here in the White House and the State Department are working toward that end.

General Powell continued by saying that even if no START agreement is possible, there is much the two sides can do together. We believe there can be a series of bilateral agreements. There is also the JVE. We anticipate signing a protocol on peaceful nuclear explosions. The General also pointed to the date of May 15 and said we would be, by the time of the Moscow Summit, two weeks beyond the start of the Soviet withdrawal for Afghanistan. Both sides could take note of this event. The General said that, even if there is no START Agreement and no Defense and Space Agreement, we can take note of the progress made today, affirm our intention to continue until we get a good agreement and pledge to work in the months ahead towards these ends. Opinion in the United States, both in Congress and in the public area, was very supportive of our pursuit of good agreements in these areas. The General went on to say that he had received some encouragement in the last few days about the prospects for INF ratification before Moscow. He had spoken to Senators Nunn, Boren and Cohen yesterday, and he was optimistic that the problems connected with futuristic weapons and interpretation issues could be solved. The General inquired at this point as to whether the Ambassador had received a list of outstanding problems from Ambassador Kampelman today and noted that the existence of these heady issues could only play into the hands of treaty opponents.

When the Dubin affirmed that he had received the list from Ambassador Kampelman, General Powell encouraged him to send this

list to Moscow promptly. These small problems needed to be solved promptly. General Powell suggested that perhaps we should send somebody to Moscow soon so that these issues could be resolved before the Geneva ministerials. He cautioned that, unless this occurred, the Senate will simply sit on its hands until the issues had been solved.

General Powell concluded by repeating again that the President was personally looking forward to visit Moscow. He is happy that the visit is to take place and anticipates very much this chance to see Moscow and to get a glimpse of Soviet life. You can be sure, said General Powell, that the President will be a gracious guest.

Dubin characterized the General's remarks as extremely important. He could affirm from personal conversations with Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze that both attached great importance to this visit of the President. They and the rest of the Soviet leadership hoped the visit would be at the same level as the General Secretary's visit to Washington. "Believe me," said the Soviet Ambassador, "I understand the mood in Moscow." - "You are correct," he said, "by being concerned about the atmosphere. You heard yourself in Moscow last week the nature of our concerns. We view the Reagan visit as not just a big event for today. We see it as a historical event. We deeply believe that it can record the things that have been achieved and project our relationship far into the future. If we succeed in planning

carefully, both Gorbachev and Reagan will be involved in a historical event. The press in the Soviet Union reflects our concerns and nothing more." Dubinin went on to say that what Ambassador Kampelman had told him this morning and the paper that had been handed to him had already been sent to Moscow. Dubinin said he could not assess the substance of the Kampelman complaints. But he was certain that Soviet experts would study them carefully over the weekend.

Dubinin continued that he would send to Moscow tonight the contents of General Powell's comments. The Embassy will wrap these two conversations together and hope that all of our complaints can be settled quietly. Otherwise, it would play into the hands of those in Moscow and Washington who oppose closer US-Soviet relations. Dubinin asked at this point what General Powell expected to emerge from the next round of ministerial meetings in Geneva. Would the US be ready to solve the sea-launched cruise missile issue?

General Powell replied that by Geneva we would probably not be much beyond our current position. We were not sure how verification could be accomplished. As we said in Moscow, we favor a form of unilateral declaration which would set a specific number of sea-launched cruise missiles. Then, we believe, the matter should be set aside until all other issues connected with START are resolved.

Dubin replied that this was a very difficult issue. He said the General would appreciate why the Soviets found our position hard to accept. A position like this on sea-launched cruise missiles would look extremely unbalanced in connection with other parts of the Treaty. If we accepted a unilateral declaration on this subject, what would the Senate say about verification? How would such a solution affect the verification of mobile missiles? Would we be ready to reach some understanding on this mobile missile issue in Geneva? General Powell replied that we did not see the mobile issue as being as difficult to handle as the sea-launched cruise missile question, and we hoped to develop a position and provide it to the Soviets in great detail by the time of Geneva -- at least with respect to deployment of missiles. Dubin commented that the position he had just heard would not please Moscow and expressed the hope that the Americans would do better in Geneva although he acknowledged that both subjects were difficult to resolve. General Powell said he agreed and he and the Ambassador reaffirmed the need for both sides to work hard together between now and the Moscow summit on these difficult questions.

General Powell suggested that perhaps the best way to proceed was to seek to reach agreement on a document by the time of the Moscow Summit which would record the progress achieved to date in START and pledge to the world that both sides would continue to work to resolve the three or four remaining open issues. The US Government was still hopeful that these questions could be solved

before the President left Office, but even if they could not be, we were relaxed that the next Administration would simply take up the questions where this Administration had left them.

Dubin did not respond to this suggestion and proceeded to ask about the status of the draft the Soviets had given us concerning the ABM issue, e.g., how to resolve the issues emerging from the Washington understanding. General Powell said that some of our people had begun to look at this draft, but that he had not yet studied it, but hoped to have done so by the time he went to Geneva. He reaffirmed that the ambiguity in the Washington understanding in December cannot exist when we move to a defense and space treaty. General Powell then referred to US ideas of a test range in space and to the proposal for sensors.

Dubin said the problem was not the concept but the substance. Sensors deemed too many in Moscow dangerous. Soviet experts felt that more was needed.

General Powell did not dispute this point but said that, whatever the solution, the Soviets must understand that we intend to proceed with our SDI. Dubin recalled that the Soviets had sought to introduce some different expressions to describe the issue to which, General Powell said, the concept of prohibited and permitted activities was simply not acceptable. The US understands the Soviet position, but we simply don't accept it.

The Soviet Ambassador then asked what other big issues could yield progress at the Summit. Was Central America a possibility? Is there a way of looking at the concept of a moratorium there as a key to a solution?

General Powell rejected this idea completely. He insisted no US President could agree on a moratorium of US assistance to our friends in Central America. Each one of our friends needs the small sums of assistance they are getting. Our estimates of Soviet assistance to Nicaragua suggested that that country has received ten times the aid we are providing, or between \$500 and \$600 million dollars per year. The Soviets are providing hundreds of tanks and personnel carriers which can only be viewed as an offensive threat to Nicaragua's neighbors.

The Soviet Ambassador replied that US figures seem too big. Soviet experts don't agree with American figures. One thing however is clear: the Soviet Union does not want bases in Nicaragua; "what we are looking for is a modus vivendi that will address the practical issues." General Powell responded that we were aware the Soviets were looking for a solution. Moscow had to understand, however, that we had not yet found it. Dubinin persisted by saying that the Soviets wanted to intensify their dialogue on this subject. There is no point, however, in telling to stop delivering supplies unilaterally. This will not solve all the problems. We are being asked to supply help and the Soviets simply cannot say no. But Dubinin continued that, just

as in Afghanistan, the Soviets would keep looking for a solution. On a personal note, Dubinin added, the Afghan issue was far more complicated than Central America. He asked, in this connection, how General Powell viewed likely development in Afghan.

General Powell replied, the developments there were hard to predict. The Resistance probably will not be satisfied until there is change in the regime. It is our hope that the United Nations can be of assistance in bringing about a reasonable political settlement. We also hope the UN can assist in the resettlement effort. The US certainly will help, but it is not clear how it will all work out. Afghanistan has a disorderly history, and it would be foolish to assume things will move smoothly now. Dubinin noted that General Powell had mentioned the UN and asked if we two powers could work together within this UN framework. General Powell replied in the affirmative and said we plan to do all we can to assist Cordevez. We do see room in Afghanistan for a broader international effort. Dubinin expressed pleasure at this reply and said there was a meeting of minds between the Soviet Union and the United States on this question. The greater our collaboration, the better the impression it will leave on the world and the more it will contribute to our dialogue on other regional issue. General Powell then turned to ask again about the details of the Moscow visit. He inquired as to whether the Soviets were satisfied with Mrs. Reagan's plan to travel to Leningrad on the Tuesday, May 31. Dubinin replied that our information on this point was most

valuable. He confided that the Soviet planners were trying to outdo the Americans in their preparation for the Soviet visit. The Soviet officialdom regarded Mrs. Reagan's trip to Leningrad as an important event. He noted that the Soviet schedulers had the trip on their schedule but were unsure as to whether they should begin detailed planning, to which General Powell replied "yes." General Powell concluded by saying the Moscow visit would be a marvelous event. All of us here in Washington were looking forward to it. As to the speeches, General Powell recalled, he had told Dubinin last Thursday in Moscow that we each have many different constituencies, and that one should not look at what the President said from place to place in the United States, but reread the speeches, toasts and statements he had issued during the Washington Summit. This would be a more accurate indication of our thinking and a better reflection of what we would be saying in Moscow.

Dubinin concluded the meeting by saying that General Powell had reassured him immeasurably by what he had said this afternoon.