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EUR Press Guidance
January 18, 2002

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(D)

ELIC

BOSNIA: TRANSFER OF SIX DETAINEES

Q: Any comment on reports that the U.S. has taken into custody six individuals with suspected links to Al-Qaida?

A: -- I CAN CONFIRM THAT U.S. MILITARY FORCES IN BOSNIA HAVE TAKEN CUSTODY OF SIX PERSONS SUSPECTED OF TERRORIST LINKS.

-- I REFER YOU TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR DETAILS.

-- THE U.S. APPRECIATES THE CLOSE COOPERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND ITS LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES IN THIS MATTER.

Q: What are their links to Al-Qaida?

A: -- BECAUSE OUR INVESTIGATION INTO THEIR ACTIVITIES IS CONTINUING, I CANNOT COMMENT ON WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THEIR LINKS TO THE AL-QAIDA TERRORIST NETWORK.

Q: Where are they now? Will they be sent to Guantanamo Bay?

A. -- I WOULD REFER YOU TO DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE ON THIS MATTER.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
CLASSIFIED BY DEPT. OF STATE, L. R. LOHMAN, DAS, A/RPS
REVIEW AUTHORITY: SHARON E AHMAD
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 17 JAN 2012
DATE/CASE ID: 29 DEC 2004 200303827

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IF ASKED:

Q: Why weren't they handed over to SFOR?

A: -- THE TRANSFER OF THESE INDIVIDUALS WAS IN RESPONSE TO A BILATERAL REQUEST FROM THE U.S.

IF ASKED:

Q: What nationality are they?

A: -- ALL SIX ARE ALGERIAN NATIONALS. WE UNDERSTAND THAT WHILE FIVE OF THEM HAD ALSO HELD BOSNIAN CITIZENSHIP, BOSNIAN AUTHORITIES TOOK STEPS TO REVOKE THAT CITIZENSHIP AND THE ISSUE WAS LITIGATED.

IF ASKED:

Q: What about the Bosnian Human Rights Chamber statement that the Algerians should not be transferred out of the country?

A: -- WE HAVE NOT SEEN THE CHAMBER'S STATEMENT AND ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO COMMENT ON IT.

IF ASKED:

Q: What does the Algerian government have to say about this?

A: -- THE GOVERNMENT OF ALGERIA IS AWARE OF THIS ACTION. I DIRECT YOU TO THAT GOVERNMENT FOR COMMENT.

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BACKGROUND: In October, Bosnian authorities at U.S. urging
detained six persons believed to be preparing an attack on
the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

The suspects were
scheduled to be released on January 18. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and the threat that the individuals therefore
pose to U.S. forces and civilians in Bosnia, release was
determined to be unacceptable. The U.S. therefore decided
to take them into custody and transfer them out of Bosnia.

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DRAFTED: EUR/SCE/BI - Raffi Gregorian 647-4195

CLEARED: EUR/FO JBOGUE

EUR/FO:PJONES OK

P:SCURRAN OK

D:TKAIDANOW OK

S/CT:TMAERTENS OK

NEA/ENA:BSTANTON OK

L/EUR:JDOROSIN OK

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