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PAGE 01 PARAMA 02182 241525Z
ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 EUR-12 SS-10 CIAE-00
EA-10 DODE-00 H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 HA-08
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FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9120
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN
USINT HAVANA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 2182

E.O. 12356: DECL: 10/23/02
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, MPOL, NS, NK
SUBJ: GOS ESTABLISHES DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA

REF: PARAMARIBO 2044

1. CONFIDENTIAL -- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: IN A JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED OCTOBER 11 IN
PYONGYANG, DPRK AND SURINAME ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. NEITHER COUNTRY IS EXPECTED TO SET
UP RESIDENT MISSION SOON, HOWEVER, REPORTS ARE THAT NORTH
KOREANS WILL SEND MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND MILITARY TRAINERS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PARAMA 02182 241525Z

TO SURINAME. ROK IS EXPECTED TO MAINTAIN ITS EMBASSY IN
PARAMARIBO. END SUMMARY.

3. IN PYONGYANG ON OCTOBER 11 DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF SURINAME'S
POLICY CENTER, MAJOR ROY HORB, SIGNED AN AGREEMENT WITH THE
DEMOCRATIC PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF KOREA (DPRK) ESTABLISHING
FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. ALTHOUGH
THE PURPOSE OF THE HORB VISIT WAS ASSUMED HERE TO BE INTENDED
FOR THIS PURPOSE, THE FACT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS
WAS NOT EXPLICITLY MADE KNOWN HERE UNTIL NOW. HORB, ACCORDING

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Adolph Eisner, Senior Reviewer

TO A PRESS REPORT OF AN INTERVIEW WITH HIM ON HIS RETURN, STRONGLY HINTED AT THE NEW CONNECTION BUT DID NOT CONFIRM IT. HE SAID SURINAME INTENDED TO SEEK RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES WHICH ADHERED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-ALIGNMENT AND NON-INTERFERENCE AND THAT 'ON THESE GROUNDS, SURINAME CAN OPEN RELATIONS WITH NORTH KOREA, WHICH IS A MEMBER OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT, WHILE RELATIONS ALREADY EXIST WITH SOUTH KOREA WHICH HAS A CONFLICT WITH NORTH KOREA.' ON THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 22, THE LOCAL TELEVISION BROADCAST THE OFFICIAL FILM OF THE HORB VISIT TO NORTH KOREA INCLUDING THE SURINAME DELEGATION'S AUDIENCE WITH KIM IL SUNG AND THE ACTUAL SIGNING CEREMONY.

4. THE SOUTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR, MOON (PROTECT), WHO OBVIOUSLY REGARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT AS A SERIOUS DEFEAT OF HIS OWN DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OVER THE PAST YEAR, LAMENTED THAT BOUTERSE HAD ONLY A FEW WEEKS EARLIER GIVEN HIM ASSURANCES THAT RELATIONS WITH THE NORTH WOULD NOT BE ESTABLISHED. MOON WAS NOT CONSOLED TO BE TOLD BY BOTH FOREIGN MINISTER NAARENDORP AND PRIME MINISTER NEYHORST THAT THEY HAD LEARNED OF THE DEPARTURE AND PURPOSE OF THE HORB MISSION ONLY AFTER THE FACT. ACCORDING TO MOON, THE PRIME MINISTER SHRUGGED, APOLOGIZED AND SAID: 'WE HAVE TWO GOVERNMENTS IN SURINAME, ONE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PARAMA 02182 241525Z

MILITARY AND ONE CIVILIAN.' MOON ANTICIPATED NO CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF HIS OWN EMBASSY. HE ALSO FELT THERE WAS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF A RESIDENT MISSION FROM THE DPRK SETTING UP ANYTIME SOON AND THOUGHT THE DPRK AMBASSADOR IN GEORGETOWN WOULD BE ASKED TO COVER SURINAME FROM THERE. (COMMENT: MFA OFFICER SAID THERE WAS NO PLAN TO ESTABLISH GOS RESIDENT MISSION IN PYONGYANG.)

5. WITH RESPECT TO THE 'COVER STORY' THAT SURINAME'S OPENING RELATIONS WITH DPRK WAS PART OF AN OVERALL EFFORT TO EXPAND TIES WITH NAM COUNTRIES, MOON SAID IT WAS A HASTILY CONTRIVED AND IRRELEVANT EXCUSE. PART OF ITS AIM WAS NO DOUBT, TO DILUTE IMPACT OF THE NEWS ON THE SURINAME PUBLIC WHICH WOULD PROBABLY RECEIVE IT WITHOUT SYMPATHY. (COMMENT: MFA EXPLAINED THAT SURINAME WAS SEEKING SUPPORT FOR ITS CANDIDACY TO NAM COORDINATING BUREAU AND OPENING RELATIONS WITH CURRENT MEMBER (DPRK) WAS PART OF ITS LOBBYING EFFORT.)

6. WHILE NOTHING HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED BEYOND ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS AS QUID PRO QUO IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED DPRK HAS PROMISED SURINAME FREE MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND TRAINERS. MOON SPECULATES THAT BOUTERSE GREW IMPATIENT WITH SLOWNESS OF VENEZUELAN AND BRAZILIANS IN RESPONDING TO HIS APPEALS FOR ARMS AND GRABBED AT OFFER FROM THE NORTH. WITH JUST A HINT OF CYNICISM (AND WITHOUT IDENTIFYING SOURCE

OF HIS INFORMATION) MOON SAID THE DPRK HAD 'BOUGHT' THE SURINAMERS FOR AN INITIAL SUM OF 'US DOL 83,050' WHICH MOON CALCULATED AS THE COST TO THEM FOR MAINTAINING AND TRANSPORTING THE 17-MAN SURINAME DELEGATION TO AND FROM PYONGYANG 'FIRST-CLASS.'

7. COMMENT: WE AGREE THAT TRYING TO JUSTIFY THIS ABRUPT AND DRAMATIC MOVE AS PART OF SYSTEMATIC DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE WITH RESPECT TO THE NAM IS PRETTY THIN STUFF. IT APPEARS A DECISION OF BOUTERSE'S ALONE, MADE ALMOST CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 PARAMA 02182 241525Z

ON IMPULSE AND WITH LITTLE APPARENT REGARD FOR DIPLOMATIC OR DOMESTIC CONSEQUENCES. MOON'S GUESS THAT THE MOTIVE WAS BOUTERSE'S SINGLE-MINDED QUEST FOR ARMS...CHEAP OR FREE AND DELIVERED QUICKLY...SEEMS A GOOD ONE.
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