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## Daily Press Briefing

### Adam Erel, Deputy Spokesman

Washington, DC

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## **TRANSCRIPT:**

1:14 p.m. EST

**MR. ERELI:** Thank you for your patience. Let me begin with a statement on the United Nations Security Council meeting in Nairobi today. The United States welcomes the signing of a declaration between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, and the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1574. The declaration reaffirms the party's commitment to expeditiously conclude the comprehensive peace agreement by the end of the year, and Resolution 1574 underscores the international community's support for the peace process and for an end to the violence in Darfur.

We are hopeful that a rapid conclusion of the talks, the north-south talks, will also provide a political basis for the resolution of other conflicts in Sudan, including the conflict in Darfur. I would note that the Security Council meeting in Nairobi highlighted the demands of the international community for an end to the violence and atrocities in Darfur, and we urge the parties to this conflict to fully implement the security and humanitarian protocols agreed to in Abuja on November 9th, and to comply with the efforts of the African Union to monitor the ceasefire and protect noncombatants.

**QUESTION:** On that?

**MR. ERELI:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** As you are aware, Darfur and Sudan is not the only thing on the agenda of the Security Council. Do you have anything to say about their other agenda item, which they took up immediately after?

**MR. ERELI:** On the issue of Somalia?

**QUESTION:** That would be it.

**MR. ERELI:** The United Nations today adopted -- I'm sorry, the United Nations Security Council today adopted a Presidential Statement on Somalia. This statement welcomes the recent progress in the Somalia reconciliation process, and urges all Somali parties to continue these reconciliation efforts.

After 13 years, the possibility of reestablishing a government in Somalia may finally be on the horizon, but that will require sustained commitment and goodwill from all Somalis.

The United States supports this reconciliation process. It's been led by Kenya under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and we welcome the appointment of Ali Mohammed Geedi as the Prime Minister of Somalia on November 3rd. We urge the transitional federal president, prime minister and assembly to focus on the immediate task at hand, which is the establishment of an effective government operating inside Somalia.

**QUESTION:** Why is it you weren't prepared to volunteer that statement to us, and you were prepared to -- or maybe I'm wrong. Maybe you were going to go right to it as soon as you had finished, but I asked about it first. Why is that guidance and not a statement?

**MR. ERELI:** The statement that focuses on the conflict in Sudan, that's the subject of the statement. If you want to get into a fuller discussion of the resolution and other issues, then obviously the Somali part of it is, you know, is relevant. But it was not part of the original statement.

**QUESTION:** Why?

**MR. ERELI:** Why was it not part of the original statement? Because the statement is focusing on this -- the issue of Sudan as opposed to the issue of the Security Council meeting. The Security Council meeting was part of -- or comes in the context of the issue of Sudan. That's what we chose to focus on -- Sudan and the Security Council meeting as a part of the overall efforts to resolve the ongoing conflict there both in Darfur and between north and south.

**QUESTION:** So anyone who might assume that the United States believes that Somalia is less important than Sudan would be absolutely incorrect?

**MR. ERELI:** The United States views them as distinct issues and appreciates each on its own merits.

**QUESTION:** Is that a yes or a no? I'm sorry. It sounds like a --

**MR. ERELI:** They're both important to us and we're pursuing peaceful reconciliation in both countries with equal determination.

Yes.

**QUESTION:** Last evening there was an extensive program that did focus on Sudan on ABC's Nightline with Ted Koppel. And Andrew Natsios took part, had some statements concerning the lack of food and other shelter materials going in, and the intransigence coming from Khartoum.

And correspondent James Walker did interview a gentleman who was supposed to be commanding all the military-type intervention. Now, if they know who the person is and both you, the State Department, UN and others do know, why isn't he under arrest or detainment?

**MR. ERELI:** I didn't see the report you're talking about so I'm not able to respond to the specific points you raised.

Simply put, there is an African Union force, monitors and protective force, in Darfur. There are commitments that both sides have made, both under the terms of the N'Djamena ceasefire and the Abuja protocols, that we look to them to implement, and that having the AU there, both to monitor implementation and serve as a protection force, is key to that.

There are clearly -- and we've, I think, been very up front about this and outspoken about it -- there are clearly violations of these commitments by both sides. And as I just said in our statement, and I think the Security Council made clear, it is the intention and commitment of the international community to hold both sides to account and to press for a rapid and complete fulfillment of these ceasefires or these protocols.

So that, yes there are violations. Yes, there are people responsible. Yes, we are -- both the United States, the African Union and others -- are working to hold people to account, and that's really what our, I think, diplomacy is focused on.

**QUESTION:** Yes, I just wondered, has the United States completed the flights that were used to send the troops (inaudible)?

**MR. ERELI:** Yes, those were finished over a week ago.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Does the U.S. expect any more countries to send any --

**MR. ERELI:** Well, there are -- obviously, the AU monitor, or the AU monitors and supporting troops have not reached their maximum 3,500, which was what the AU is projecting to send. The original numbers were, I think, 200 -- there were originally 250, and then there were another several hundred added that was -- many of whom we flew in. I don't know what the total number is now, but the numbers continue to grow. I'd have to check and see where they are in terms of the count. And I don't think it's been determined where all 3,500 are going to come from. That's still, frankly, a work in progress.

There are, as you know, other countries that have pledged support for this mission. The EU has pledged significant support -- I think in the area of \$100 million. Australia has offered airlift support for additional troop movements. So it is a multinational effort focused on getting the AU troops in place. But let me check and see for sure where we are on the numbers.

Yes, Tammy.

**QUESTION:** Can I shift to Iran?

**MR. ERELI:** Sure.

**QUESTION:** Is there any concern either on the part of the Secretary or this building that the information that he shared about Iranian efforts toward weaponization may be based on unverified intelligence and the potential for a credibility -- compounding the credibility problem that America already has?

**MR. ERELI:** I'm not going to speak to the intelligence information available to us. What I will say is that we believe we are on very, very solid ground in pointing to a clandestine effort by Iran to develop weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. This has been a refrain of the United States for well over a decade. It is a consistent theme of our diplomacy, both publicly and privately. And we will continue to call attention to what we believe are Iran's clandestine efforts that threaten the region and U.S. interests in the region.

**QUESTION:** Therefore, do you believe that Iran is, in fact, weaponizing? Is that -- you talked about solid ground.

**MR. ERELI:** As I said, we believe there is solid information to substantiate Iranian -- clandestine Iranian efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems, and this is something we've been saying for quite some time. And I would note, in the context of the current discussion in the Board of Governors and regarding Iran's enrichment program, that four years ago, when we started, I think, forcefully and vocally bringing this issue to the attention of the international community, we were greeted with skepticism and doubt, and that over the course of our persistent efforts to press this issue, we succeeded in, I think, moving the pendulum in the other direction, where now the international community recognizes there's a problem, believes that our claims from before are substantiated, and as a result is working together to address the problems posed by Iran's nuclear activity, which is in contravention of many of its treaty commitments.

**QUESTION:** But which -- exactly what countries agree with you that your evidence is substantiated about Iran's drive?

**MR. ERELI:** Well, I would point to the fact that Russia, as a result of, you know, this effort, has agreed that -- not to supply fuel to Bushehr until these concerns are addressed, and if they did supply fuel, it would only be on a closed fuel cycle. If you didn't think the concerns were substantiated, or didn't think the concerns would have merit, you wouldn't do that.

And I'd also point to seven Board of Governor resolutions, adopted by consensus, that raise serious questions about Iran's program, that point to Iran's failings and that call for Iran to undertake actions to reassure the IAEA and to reassure the international community. So that are very tangible -- those are very tangible indicators.

**QUESTION:** None of them -- none of them say -- come out and say what you've just said, that they agree that the United States has evidence that substantiates that Iran is trying to develop a nuclear weapon.

**MR. ERELI:** I would say --

**QUESTION:** Do they or do they not? I mean, the IAEA has been specific in saying, in saying not that. In saying --

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) said it today.

**MR. ERELI:** Okay, let me, perhaps, rephrase it and say that what we're seeing in the IAEA Board of Governors, what we're seeing in our dealings with other countries is that -- compared to where we were four years ago -- is that there is a recognition that the position of the United States regarding Iran's nuclear activity is -- has merit and that there are -- that it is of concern, and that therefore, based on the fact that our position has gained currency because of our diplomacy, we see a level of consensus and a level of commitment to dealing with this problem that did not exist.

Now, on the question of a covert nuclear weapons program, there are differences of opinion. We believe that the arguments stack up in our favor. We will continue to press this case. We do not believe that a country with the world's second largest reserves of natural gas has a need for nuclear energy, and that there is no rationale other than non-peaceful for this kind of investment in this kind of activity. And we will continue to make our case.

**QUESTION:** But the fact that -- your answer to the first bit -- not that second part, but the answer to the first bit leads directly back to Tammy's question. You have -- yes, you have succeeded in swinging the pendulum of world opinion to share at least, if not your conclusions, your concerns. Is there not a fear that the information that was shared the other day might hurt that effort and the effort to get other people to come around to your conclusions, rather than just your concerns?

**MR. ERELI:** I think the point that we're consistently making is, look at this in context. Don't just focus on an enrichment -- uranium enrichment program. Don't just focus on a nuclear plant here or a nuclear plant here. But look at it in the totality of the picture. And the picture is you've got undeclared and -- undeclared nuclear activity, deliberate misinformation on nuclear activity, development of delivery systems and other technical research that, added all up, paints a very troubling picture.

And you need to look at it in that perspective, rather than just, you know, one specific issue or one specific aspect of the problem divorced from another problem, from another -- from the totality of it. And in that context, when you add it all up, it's a very troubling picture. And I think that what we're trying to do is explain that this is all part and parcel of a coordinated attempt.

**QUESTION:** Doesn't it strike you as unusual that you're using the exact same -- the exact opposite rationale on this that you used with Iraq, where you were telling people to focus on particularly one specific thing? Doesn't that give you any pause at all when you're standing up there?

**MR. ERELI:** I don't understand. I don't understand the question.

**QUESTION:** Nevermind.

**QUESTION:** Adam --

**QUESTION:** No, but I do have a question. It's now a few days it's been out there, that intelligence supports the opposition groups' claim that Iran is trying to adapt missiles to nuclear weapons. Which intelligence? We learn from Iraq, the Iraq experience, number one, that it's not an off, out-of-bounds question because the CIA was identified as the primary source of Secretary Powell's speech to the UN, and we also learned that the State Department intelligence, which is a smaller outfit, didn't go along on all fronts.

So whose -- which intelligence? Who is corroborating an obviously biased group's report of what Iran is up to?

**MR. ERELI:** Barry, I'm not in a position to talk about intelligence --

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) we're in a position to talk about Powell going over to see the CIA Director for four days, getting a total (inaudible). What you guys neglected to tell us is that not every intelligence part of the government was in agreement with what he was hearing over there. And, of course, what he was hearing over there was baloney, so -- or mostly baloney.

**MR. ERELI:** I'd dispute that, but anyway --

**QUESTION:** Well, where are the weapons of mass destruction?

**MR. ERELI:** But I'm not in a position to discuss with you the kind of intelligence we have or the status of debate within the international interagency community about --

**QUESTION:** Which part of the intelligence apparatus of the U.S. Government is verifying this opposition group's accusations?

**MR. ERELI:** I don't know.

**QUESTION:** Adam --

**QUESTION:** Adam, excuse me?

**MR. ERELI:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** Adam, the Secretary himself -- I mean, I know you don't want to get into intelligence, but the Secretary himself mentioned that he saw some intelligence that is now, you know, whoever it is, on background or whatever, some U. S. officials are discrediting as not fully vetted, not fully scrubbed. So does the Secretary stand by his remarks in terms of his backing up his claims referring to this intelligence?

**MR. ERELI:** I don't think this is a question of backing up claims or not backing up claims. The Secretary did not

misspeak. The Secretary knows exactly what he was talking about. And there is a firm basis for the Secretary making the remarks that he made. And there should be, I think, no question of -- in our mind -- of casting doubt or walking it back.

**QUESTION:** Okay, but when you say that there's a firm basis, he is citing his firm basis on the intelligence that he saw.

**MR. ERELI:** Yeah. I'm not going to get into a public debate about the nature and quality of the information. I'm just not.

**QUESTION:** Well, when you say a firm basis, are you referring to the intelligence that he had seen, in terms of that being reliable and solid? Or are you talking about he had a firm basis for saying what he said in terms of he saw a piece of paper and --

**MR. ERELI:** The Secretary used the word information.

**QUESTION:** Okay. The Secretary saw information --

**MR. ERELI:** And information is totality of inputs leading to a considered conclusion.

**QUESTION:** Well, but that information, though, he regards as solid, that he would not have mentioned it or spoken of it unless he was certain that it was solid, is that correct?

**MR. ERELI:** I think that's correct.

**QUESTION:** You think that's correct. Okay. Well, then how -- that hasn't always been the case, has it? Or was it -- or it was, in fact, on February 5th?

**MR. ERELI:** You know, I'm not going to get into, sort of, parallels with other situations.

**QUESTION:** Well, the problem is --

**MR. ERELI:** What I think we need to keep in mind is that our concerns -- we've had longstanding concerns about Iran's weapons programs. That includes WMD material and delivery systems. We believe there is justification and good reason to conclude that Iran is intent on developing weapons of mass destruction and the systems capable of delivering them, and that this program -- coordinated program -- represents a threat to the region and to the U.S. interests. We have said this very clearly for a long time, and the Secretary's remarks should be read in that context.

**QUESTION:** But --

**MR. ERELI:** And that the threat posed by Iran and the nature of the Iranian program is unique and distinct from other cases.

**QUESTION:** Does the State Department share the view of the -- share the view of officials who are quoted this morning that that information that the Secretary was referring to was not entirely backed up and solid?

**MR. ERELI:** No. The State Department stands by the comments of the Secretary and believes --and what the Secretary said is valid and stands up.

**QUESTION:** Well, I realize that -- what the Secretary said. But what the Secretary said was that he had seen information. Now, is that what you're trying to defend? Is that what you're saying --

**MR. ERELI:** I'm not trying to defend anything.

**QUESTION:** -- that he had seen this information?

**MR. ERELI:** I'm not trying to defend anything. I am trying to tell you is -- what I'm tell --

**QUESTION:** Well, you just said the State Department stands by what the Secretary said. And what I'm trying to get at is that, do you stand by the actual words that the Secretary said --

**MR. ERELI:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** -- or the import behind them?

**MR. ERELI:** Both.

**QUESTION:** Both.

**MR. ERELI:** Both.

**QUESTION:** So you disagree then with these people who are quoted this morning as saying that this intelligence is wishy-washy and not --

**MR. ERELI:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** May I follow, Adam? Can you confirm something? One, if Iran's nuclear program is connected in any way with A.Q. Khan; and, two, there was a report that Iran is capable of making a bomb within a year; and finally, if Iran, at any time, or U.S. or any European allies made a statement or any agreement that Iran is willing to give up or dismantle its nuclear program on conditions?

**MR. ERELI:** I'm not aware of any agreement by Iran to dismantle its program under conditions.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) Libya?

**MR. ERELI:** No, there is no such -- I have not seen any such offer. On the question of A.Q. Khan, I don't have any information to share with you about the connection between A.Q. Khan and Iran. I would tell you that, obviously, Pakistan has acted, I think, decisively to break up and dismantle the A.Q. Khan network or working to find out where its tentacles reach; and that, obviously, this A.Q. Khan network has had connections with other countries and it's certainly a subject of interest but I don't have anything specific to share with you on it.

And your -- the third question was?

**QUESTION:** Within a year, a bomb, is going to make -- Iran is going to make a bomb within a year.

**MR. ERELI:** There is a lot of different, I guess, analysis and thought being given to that subject, but I don't have a considered judgment to share with you.

**QUESTION:** And finally, let's say Iran really doesn't agree with IAEA or global pressure, UN pressure and all that, just like Libya was doing in the beginning. And where do we stand now, because the threat is growing from Iran and also there is a resolution by the candidates in the UN about the human rights violations or people are suffering in Iran as far as human rights are concerned. So what I'm saying is, is U.S. going to take action, military action or, and if Iran doesn't agree on any conditions?

**MR. ERELI:** Military action is not something that we're talking about. We have said quite clearly that we are committed to dealing with this threat through multilateral diplomacy, and that remains our position.

**QUESTION:** And human rights violations?

**MR. ERELI:** Human rights violations are a constant, recurring concern of ours. We speak to the matter publicly, we work with others to try to address the problem, and it remains an issue.

**QUESTION:** Speaking of multilateral diplomacy, Adam, can I move to Iraq for a second?

**MR. ERELI:** Are we done with Iran?

Yes.

**QUESTION:** No, Adam -- to complicate matters even more, there was a later report this morning about -- out of Vienna, diplomats are saying that the Iranians are hurrying up to produce this gas and then another diplomat came out and said this first diplomat might be confusing the two. Do you have any information on what these diplomats are talking about?

**MR. ERELI:** We've seen reports of UH-6 production going on in Iran. I can't substantiate them. Obviously, they are of concern. If true, that would yet again raise serious concerns about Iranian good faith and intentions. It was our understanding that the November 14th agreement between Iran and the EU-3 required the immediate suspension

of enrichment activities. And so we will be consulting with the Europeans and other Board of Governors on this issue. These allegations only heighten our concerns that Iran continues to pursue nuclear activities and does not honor its commitments.

On Iran? Yes.

**QUESTION:** Iraq. I'm just wondering if you can tell us what the U.S. Government's position is on the position of Germany and several other countries in NATO refusing to allow their officers seconded to NATO bases to -- refusing to allow them to participate in the NATO training exercise in Iraq.

**MR. ERELI:** First of all, we've very pleased that -- with the agreement two days ago finalizing the operational details of the deployment of NATO forces to Iraq to conduct training missions for Iraqi security. This is, I think, an important signal of Euro-Atlantic consensus on the need to support Iraq and on the need -- and on the importance of working together through international alliances in support of common objectives, and that cooperation among the members of the Atlantic alliance should be noted and commended.

With regard to the decisions of specific countries related to the participation in this deployment, that's up to them.

I would note that all 26 alliance members joined in the consensus on this operation, are sharing the costs of this operation, that 16 of the 26 are contributing forces to this operation, and that 10 others, at this point, are not. But obviously, you know, as this mission evolves we would certainly look forward to participation of as many as possible. That's what I have to say on it.

**QUESTION:** You don't regard it as problematic?

**MR. ERELI:** It doesn't --

**QUESTION:** Perhaps not for -- in terms of any effect it might have on this mission, but just as in a general principle of countries saying that their troops who are under NATO command aren't subject to NATO orders?

**MR. ERELI:** I think it does not detract from the important signal that achieving consensus on this mission represents and on the kind of cooperation that we've seen to actually deal with the logistics and get it under way.

**QUESTION:** Right. But in terms of its implications for other -- for other issues or it's just --

**MR. ERELI:** It's a decision of the individual countries that does not undermine the importance or value of the overall mission.

**QUESTION:** And you're not suggesting the United States doesn't have a problem with this stance, are you?

**MR. ERELI:** I'm suggesting that it's up to each country to decide what it does and that, you know, this is their decision. I think we can make clear our view that it -- that we don't necessarily agree with it, but it's their decision.

**QUESTION:** Well, let me just put it this way: Do you believe that officers who are under NATO command should obey NATO orders?

**MR. ERELI:** We believe that it would be desirable and useful for as full a participation in this mission as possible. But I'm not going to get into interpretation of NATO regulations.

Yes.

**QUESTION:** On the Palestinian-Israeli type crisis right now -- on their crisis, there's a change of attitude, apparently, by Prime Minister Sharon to drop the demand that they've always long had to require the Palestinians to end their -- to quell the militant groups. And there's a question in a front-page article in *The New York Times* today -- many of the Palestinians, especially some of these militant groups, want Mr. Bargudi, who's been in detention in Israeli jails, to maybe replace -- or at least come up for election -- Yasser Arafat. What is your thought concerning that? Would that be beneficial to have him -- he's been a militant, a top militant -- for -- running elections, yet he's still detained?

**MR. ERELI:** I don't have an opinion to express on individual candidates or internal Palestinian politics. Our view is that elections -- that we support elections for new Palestinian leadership, that these elections should -- need to be as inclusive and transparent as possible, that we will work with the Palestinian leadership, the emerging Palestinian leadership and the Israelis to ensure that these elections meet the needs and expectations of the Palestinian people.

I think the Secretary will be going to Sharm to underscore this commitment in his meetings with the Palestinian leadership and his Israeli counterparts. And as far as Mr. Sharon's comments, I don't have any reaction to them. I mean, this is -- I'd refer you to them for elaboration.

**QUESTION:** Another subject. Once again this year, before the UN General Assembly meeting, senior officials briefed us on your plans and goals and your expectations for this year; and once again this year, despite my not being convinced, they predicted success on the cloning ban; and once again this year, you're going to go down in flames for this. If it hasn't happened yet this morning, it's going to happen shortly that the committee involved is going to postpone any debate on this until February. And I'm just wondering if you're disappointed, or if you failed to see the writing on the wall, that I predicted again back in September.

**MR. ERELI:** I think we're actually pleased with the progress that we have made in preventing any action by the United Nations that would endorse human cloning in any form. As you know, it's our longstanding position that all human cloning is wrong and that we -- and we are proud of our efforts to prevent human cloning. So the fact that there isn't any action by the UN to endorse cloning is a moderate success.

As far as the decision to refer the issue to a working group, I would note that that vote is taking place this afternoon. It has not yet taken place. But as a general proposition, we believe that should there be a working group, it would provide further opportunity for us and likeminded nations like Italy, who sponsored the declaration that is under debate now, to press the position that all human cloning is wrong and should be banned.

**QUESTION:** So that's a very interesting way of putting it. I'm sure you'll agree. Your failure to get a total ban on cloning through is not a failure? It's a success because you've managed to prevent any action on it at all?

**MR. ERELI:** You know, obviously, we'd like to get a total ban. We recognize that that may not be possible right now. On the other side of the coin, you can say that -- you can also say that we have been successful in preventing any endorsement of cloning. So, you know, you can look at the glass as half empty or you can look at the glass as half full. We choose to look at it as half full and to work toward getting a -- getting it to the brim soon.

**QUESTION:** Right, but you're patting yourself on the back for sabotaging other people, instead of patting yourself --

**MR. ERELI:** I wouldn't say we're patting ourselves on the back.

**QUESTION:** That's exactly what you did.

**MR. ERELI:** We're patting ourselves on the back for standing up for principle.

**QUESTION:** Okay, and blocking other people and -- being obstructionist.

**MR. ERELI:** And for supporting an international consensus against human cloning.

**QUESTION:** New question?

**MR. ERELI:** I'm sorry. We've got more.

Paul.

**QUESTION:** Do you have any reaction to a bomb attack that killed a Venezuelan prosecutor -- what -- last night, I believe?

**MR. ERELI:** The United States strongly condemns this act of violence directed against prosecutor Danilo Anderson. We offer our condolences to his family and call for a full investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators. We continue to urge all Venezuelan -- Venezuelans to reject efforts to resolve political differences or achieve political objectives through violent means.

**QUESTION:** Yesterday --

**MR. ERELI:** Matt.

**QUESTION:** -- you imposed sanctions on a Russian company for missile technology proliferation.

**MR. ERELI:** Right.

**QUESTION:** That's kind of straightforward, except if you have any other details on exactly who they were supposed to have sold the stuff to, that would -- I would appreciate that.

But my main question is, at the same time as you imposed these sanctions, you rescinded sanctions that had been imposed on this company back in July. Now, in July 22nd, to which the notices yesterday refer to, the notice in the Federal Register about the sanctions said that you were withholding the name of the company and all details about this -- the transactions for the sake of national security. The company was not identified, and yet yesterday when you rescinded them, you did identify the company and then identified it again when you imposed the new sanctions. Can you explain this?

**MR. ERELI:** Not to your satisfaction right now, for the simple reason is that I had the information with me yesterday. I don't have it today. There are -- we do have answers to those questions. It was a reclassification of the company. Previously, it had been the subject of missile sanctions based on information and determinations. We changed that to make it subject to the executive order. But before going into further detail, let me get you the guidance, which I don't have with me now.

**QUESTION:** A couple of questions on South Asia. (Inaudible) Secretary from this Department. Could you give some details about the Secretary's visit to Afghanistan? And also I understand he will be stopping by in Islamabad for a farewell party.

**MR. ERELI:** I don't have any information for you on travel plans by the Secretary beyond his intention to participate in meetings in Europe in December. Other travel hasn't been firmed up.

**QUESTION:** And this afternoon, Foreign Secretary of India will be meeting with Mr. Armitage, Deputy Secretary. What are the plans that they wish to -- because the Foreign Secretary was recently here. I mean, what are --

**MR. ERELI:** Well, as you know, I mean, the United States and India have a broad and substantive dialogue on a wide range of issues, starting with our strategic cooperation and extending to other bilateral and regional questions. This is -- that will be what they talk about. We'll endeavor to get you a fuller readout after the meeting.

**QUESTION:** And they are discussing coming up, like the change in the Department as far as the new Secretary is coming or anything to do with --

**MR. ERELI:** That's not normally an issue of discussion with other countries. We'll be talking about bilateral issues.

**QUESTION:** And finally, what is the political future of Ms. Christina Rocca from the South Asia Bureau?

**MR. ERELI:** You should ask her.

**QUESTION:** I mean, is she going to stay or --

**MR. ERELI:** You'd have to ask her.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**MR. ERELI:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** Adam, the Secretary was in Santiago, Chile, briefly, decided to -- further to the Middle East on his tour, but President Bush tomorrow is going to be talking with leaders with respect to North Korea. But did Secretary Powell, before he left Santiago, have anything --

**MR. ERELI:** He's still there.

**QUESTION:** He's still there, okay. Did he have any way of, in his talks, because today 3,937 political prisoners are being released in Myanmar? And do you have any comments further concerning that?

**MR. ERELI:** On the subject of the Secretary's discussions of North Korea, I'd refer you to a transcript of a background briefing, which we put out earlier this morning in which senior State Department officials spoke to that issue.

Did we put it out, Tom?

**MR. CASEY:** No.

**MR. ERELI:** Okay, well, I'll refer you to --

**MR. CASEY:** I guess we will now.

**MR. ERELI:** We will now. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** That was here in Washington?

**MR. ERELI:** No. It was in -- with the party.

**MR. CASEY:** It was with the party in Santiago.

**MR. ERELI:** So they can -- we can provide you with that.

**QUESTION:** And you have Burma guidance?

**MR. ERELI:** And I have Burma guidance.

**QUESTION:** Excellent.

**MR. ERELI:** On the release of prisoners in Burma, we've seen the reports that several thousand prisoners, including some that have been held for their political beliefs, have been released from Burmese prisons. These do not, obviously -- they do not, obviously, include Aung San Suu Kyi, U Tin U and other leading political dissidents. We call upon the Burmese authorities to release these individuals and all political prisoners immediately and unconditionally.

**QUESTION:** Why they are not putting pressure on Burma? I saw -- continue to -- while --

**MR. ERELI:** I take issue with the statement that we're not putting pressure on Burma. Burma is the subject of concerted international and diplomatic pressure from us and others including extensive sanctions.

**QUESTION:** This poor lady's suffering for so many years in and out of the jail and --

**MR. ERELI:** I agree. That's why we're working so hard to -- and speaking so consistently for her release.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**QUESTION:** Adam?

**MR. ERELI:** Let's -- okay, thanks.

(The briefing was concluded at 1:55 p.m.)

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