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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

1986

SUBJECT: Meeting between SECDEF and Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdeletif Filali (U).

~~(C)~~ The very cordial meeting in SECDEF's office commenced at 1335, 30 September, and lasted thirty minutes. Attendees were: Minister Filali, Moroccan DATT Col Kostali, DASD/NESA Pelletreau, STATE Country Director David Zweifel, LTC Higgins and CDR Hartung (notetaker).

~~(S)~~ Minister Filali led off saying the King received with great pleasure the letter that SECDEF had recently sent him regarding the courage King Hassan had displayed in meeting with Prime Minister Peres and the wisdom evinced with the rupture of the Libyan Accord. He continued, offering to update the Secretary on strategic developments in the region, adding that the clouds over our relationship had now been dispelled and broader cooperation should follow. The Minister said Morocco advocates moderation and is convinced that only compromise would lead to settlement of the Middle East problem. Direct contact is the way to deal with a problem, no matter the issue. Minister Filali said that Morocco had taken some risks, but that the medium term benefits of seeing the moderate opposing forces sitting at the same table would outweigh those risks. He also said that it is Morocco's intent to find a viable solution and he believed that a lot of the ground work had been accomplished, and now the US must do something to support the effort.

~~(S)~~ Minister Filali said his second strategic issue dealt with breaking the Libyan Accord. He said he thought that SECDEF understood this union was only circumstantial based on the regional situation at the time. Morocco had neutralized Libya, which was the King's goal, and now the divorce was final. The Minister noted that he had recently met Secretary Shultz and had a conversation that was similar to this one as the issues are very much related. He said the King would talk further with President Reagan and would talk with the Secretary when Mr Weinberger comes to Morocco. Noting the King's focus on the paragraph in SECDEF's letter referring to the US commitment to Moroccan sovereignty, the Minister he opined that special attention from the US would be required to realize the military progress discussed during previous military discussions. Morocco has taken a political decision to participate with the Spain, Portugal and NATO in defense of the Mediterranean and Straits of Gibraltar. In order for that to be done with dignity, the US should think about new development and other aid. This was the King's message to the Secretary.

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~~DASD/NESA~~

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~~(S)~~ Secretary Weinberger praised the King's recent favorable acts and expressed his pleasure at the breaking of the Accord. He said the US wants to resume normal ties and hoped that the King would come to see the President, reminding the Minister that the King had cancelled the last visit. SECDEF was adamant in expressing the Administration's desire to help Morocco in the ways we are best able. He pointed out how austere Foreign Aid funding might be with the prevailing attitude in Congress. SECDEF said that we are not bankers trying to make money on the money we lend and we would try to relieve the debt burden on Morocco, indicating that His Majesty's actions would help in this effort. Secretary Weinberger stated that we need to stretch aid dollars by developing Morocco's ability to maintain current equipment, by enhancing rebuild facilities, developing a capacity to manufacture ammunition and through joint exercises. He said the US would try to increase the quality of Moroccan equipment and work on quantity when our economy allowed. He added that we were very worried about our ability to fund needed security assistance for many of our friends but had managed to find and allocate an extra \$5 million in ESF for Morocco in FY 86.

~~(C)~~ Regarding a visit to Morocco SECDEF said he would try to visit Morocco in conjunction with a planned trip to Europe in early December.

~~(S)~~ SECDEF then asked the Minister if they had any evidence that Qadhafi has started to supply the POLISARIO again. The Minister replied that they had no evidence, only fears, adding that Qadhafi had hosted the SDAR President the day after the Accord was abrogated. The Secretary said he thought Qadhafi was much less effective after our raid and the breaking of the Accord, citing the recent trip Qadhafi had made to the NAM and North Africa.

~~(S)~~ SECDEF then asked how Morocco's relations with Tunis and Algiers were. The Minister said relations with Algiers were good, adding that a meeting between the King and President Chadli was close at hand before the Hassan-Peres meeting, but it was delayed after that event. SECDEF said we support a Western Sahara settlement through negotiation, and would use our influence with Algeria toward that end. He added that our ties with Tunisia would also increase and that we would help them against Libya. Sharing our concerns over Tunisia, Minister Filali said he hoped they would heed Moroccan and US suggestions. The meeting ended with the Secretary saying he was delighted to see the Minister again and that he looked forward to coming to Morocco.

Prepared by: *Jim Hartung*  
CDR Hartung, Ex 79745

Approved by: *Robert H Pelletreau*  
Robert H Pelletreau  
Deputy