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TERMS OF REFERENCE

DECLASSIFIED FEB 03 2009  
Authority: EO 12958 as amended  
Chief, Records & Declass Div, WHS

JOINT INVESTIGATION GROUP (U)

1. (U) INTRODUCTION. On 17 May 1987, a US Navy Guided Missile Frigate, the USS STARK, (FFG-31), on routine patrol in the Persian Gulf, was apparently attacked by one or more missiles fired from an aircraft, believed to be an Iraqi Mirage F-1. During and immediately following the attack, US losses appear to have included at least 37 personnel killed, several others injured in the explosion and ensuing fires, and significant damage to the vessel, the value of which remains to be determined. Iraqi officials appear subsequently to have accepted responsibility for an inadvertent attack, and appear to desire discussions with members of a US group empowered to investigate the incident and make appropriate findings and recommendations.

2. (U) DESIGNATION. The group is designated the US Element of the Joint Investigation Group, herein referred to as "The Group". This name is UNCLASSIFIED.

3. (U) MISSION. The group in official cooperation with representatives of the Government of Iraq (GOI), will investigate and document the events surrounding the attack on the USS STARK; determine national responsibility for the attack; and recommend procedures to prevent the recurrence of a similar inadvertent incident.

4. ~~(S)~~ OPERATION AND ADMINISTRATION.

a. ~~(S)~~ The group will consist of approximately 10 members, as follows:

| <u>POSITION</u>    | <u>GRADE</u> | <u>ORGANIZATION</u> |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Group Chief        | O7           | OJCS/J3             |
| Pol-Mil Officer    | O6           | OJCS/J5             |
| Legal Advisor      | O6           | OCJCS/LALA          |
| Regional DIO       | O6           | DIA                 |
| USN TAO            | O5           | USN                 |
| AWACS Specialist   | O5           | HQ, TAC             |
| USAF Fighter Pilot | O4           | HQ, TAC             |
| Admin Officer      | O4           | OJCS/J3             |
| Country Specialist | Civ          | Dept of State       |
| Legal Advisor      | Civ          | Dept of State       |

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The group will operate under the direction of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and will be led by a representative of the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The State Department representative will provide appropriate political advice and counsel respecting US foreign policy and international relations.

b. (U) The Department of State representative will arrange for appropriate briefings to the group by members of the country teams of countries visited.

c. (U) Specific dates for the in-country portion of the group's schedule will be coordinated by OJCS. Approval of the details of the visits will be coordinated with host governments by the Department of State.

d. (U) US diplomatic missions in each of the countries visited will arrange and coordinate logistical support, to include lodging, transportation, interpreter service, administrative support, communications access, and work spaces.

e. (U) Class A uniforms will be worn by military members while performing official functions in each of the countries visited, except as may be directed by the Group Chief after consultation with the Country Team.

f. (U) The US Diplomatic Missions should arrange for host government recognition of group members as experts of the United States on official mission, with appropriate rights, privileges and immunities.

5. (U) DURATION. Approximate duration of the in-country portion of the inquiry will be one week.

6. (U) COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

a. (U) The Group Leader is the representative of the Secretary of Defense, under the direction of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Upon arrival in each of the countries visited, the Group will report to the US Ambassador, or to the Deputy Chief of Mission in the absence of the Ambassador, and will serve under his overall cognizance.

b. (U) The group is authorized to:

(1) (U) Consult with officials of the host governments as may be necessary and approved by the US Diplomatic Missions to the governments.

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(2) (U) Advise the host governments that the purpose of the visit is solely to ascertain facts leading to the accomplishment of the mission as stated above.

(3) (U) Exchange information leading to a common understanding of the facts leading to the attack of the USS STARK.

c. (U) The group will make clear to the host government's representatives that any outcomes, conclusions, or recommendations of the discussions are to be understood to be ad referendum, and will require subsequent approval by the respective national authorities.

e. (U) The group will make no commitment for follow-on technical discussions or further inquiries.

7. (U) REPORTS TO DOD. After returning to CONUS, the group Chief will submit a report to the Chairman JCS. The Chairman will submit the report to the Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs to be reviewed for appropriate policy considerations prior to forwarding to the Secretary of Defense. The report will contain a synopsis of Group/Host Government discussions; a definitive statement of the tasks performed; a synopsis of courses of action considered; and recommendations on prevention of future occurrences of similar incidents.

8. (U) PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE. Upon completion of the required briefings and submission of the completed survey report, group members will be released and will revert to full-time duties with respective agencies. However, the Group Chief and selected group members may be required to present the report and briefings to concerned agencies and officials as appropriate.

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