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Viewing cable 04BRUSSELS4843, MALTESE SEEKING ITS WAY OUT OF NATO-EU BLOCKAGE

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
04BRUSSELS4843	2004-11-10 16:35	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Brussels

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 004843

SIPDIS

NOFORN

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/ERA AND EUR/RPM
 VALLETTA FOR DCM GRANT
 ANKARA FOR DAVID BERGER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/09/2014
 TAGS: FROE, PGOV, EC, CY, EU, EUP, NATO, USEU, EUR/ERA
 SUBJECT: MALTESE SEEKING ITS WAY OUT OF NATO-EU BLOCKAGE

REF: A. BRUSSELS 4082 B. BRUSSELS 4295 C. IIR 6 917
 0014 05

Classified By: USEU Political Military Officer Jeremy Brenner for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Malta's Ambassador to the EU will propose to Valletta that Malta should declare its Pfp agreements from 1994 remain in force, although the country has withdrawn from active participation. Under this approach, Malta would make the argument that they satisfy the requirements for participation in EU-NATO strategic discussions. End summary.

¶2. (C) In the course of an introductory meeting with Major Martin Xuereb, Maltese Attache to the EU for Military and Foreign Policy Affairs, USEU polmiloffs discussed the current Cyprus/Malta blockage in EU-NATO cooperation. Also present was Deborah Mangion, Maltese First Secretary for Legal Affairs.

¶3. (C/NF) Membership in Pfp, or even subscription to the Framework Document as required by the EU-NATO Security Agreement, face difficult obstacles in the closely divided Maltese political environment. Malta Officials estimated that popular sentiment is running 50/50 over Malta re-joining NATO Pfp. Malta's neutrality clause is also an issue that enjoys strong support among the population. Given the current stalemate over the NATO security agreement and political challenges of Malta re-joining Pfp, the question arose whether Malta had withdrawn completely from Pfp in 1996, or simply ended its active participation and its Individual Partner Program (IPP). In seeking a way forward, it was suggested that if Malta had simply ceased active participation in Pfp -- but had not formally withdrawn from the agreements -- it might be possible for Malta to reaffirm that their prior Pfp agreements remained in force. This would spare the Maltese government from requesting a divisive Parliamentary vote to join Pfp, and could set the stage for Malta to participate in EU-NATO strategic discussions.

¶4. (C/NF) In a follow-on discussion with Maltese Ambassador to the EU Richard Cachia-Caruana, he told us that he was, in fact, advocating precisely such an approach to Valletta. According to his interpretation, the Government of Malta can argue that they never withdrew from or renounced the security agreement they had entered into with NATO as part of their Pfp membership, nor did they rescind their adherence to the Framework Document. Such an approach would obviate the need to return to Malta's Parliament to request approval of a (new) subscription to the Pfp Framework Document, and also

eliminate the need to negotiate (and ratify) a security agreement with NATO. Ambassador Cachia-Caruana said that he hoped this could be done before the December decision on Turkish accession to the EU, so as to avoid any linkage between the two issues.

U5. (C/NF) Comment: This Maltese initiative presents some potential for movement toward breaking the logjam that has grown increasingly frustrating to both EU and NATO representatives. If Valletta declares unilaterally that the pre-existing agreements remain in force, Turkey's legitimate legal concerns based on its reading of the two relevant documents will be addressed -- at least in the case of Malta. Turkish acquiescence to a solution for Malta might allow a possible way forward to emerge, as Cypriot representatives have already expressed a willingness to consider subscribing to the PfP Framework document (ref B). Ambassador Cachia-Caruana is scheduled for a courtesy call with Ambassador Schnabel in the coming days. We anticipate he will raise the Maltese proposal in that meeting, and seek any Washington guidance on this idea.

McKinley