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**FROM**

FM (b)(3):10 USC 424

**TO**

TO RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC/ (b)(3):10 USC 424

**CONTROLS**

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SERIAL: (U) IIR (b)(3):10 USC 42

**BODY**

COUNTRY: (U) **ARGENTINA (AR)**; ITALY (IT); UNITED KINGDOM (UK).

IPSP: (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

SUBJ: IIR (b)(3):10 USC 424 ARGENTINE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF BIDS FAREWELL TO FOREIGN ATTACHES (U)

WARNING: (U) THIS IS AN INFORMATION REPORT, NOT FINALLY EVALUATED INTELLIGENCE. REPORT CLASSIFIED

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
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DOI: (U) 991124.

REQS: (U) (b)(3):10 USC 424

(b)(3):10 USC 424;(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

SUMMARY: (U) GENERAL ((BALZA)) MET WITH FOREIGN ATTACHES TO BID THEM FAREWELL AFTER 8 YEARS AS ARGENTINE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, REFLECTING ON HIS TENURE, AND CLARIFYING THAT HE WOULD STAY ON UNTIL AT LEAST THE 991210 CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT.

TEXT: 1. (U) GENERAL **MARTIN ANTONIO ((BALZA))** INVITED ALL FOREIGN ATTACHES ACCREDITED TO THE ARGENTINE ARMY TO HIS OFFICE ON 991124 IN ORDER TO BID THEM FAREWELL AS HE PREPARES TO RETIRE. HIS MOOD WAS REFLECTIVE. ALSO PRESENT WERE LTG LAINO, LTG BRINZONI, AND SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE ARMY GENERAL STAFF.

2. (U) BALZA PRAISED THE OPENNESS BETWEEN ALL COUNTRIES REPRESENTED, AND UNDERSCORED THAT ATTACHES NOWADAYS SERVE AS A CRITICAL LINK BETWEEN ARMIES IN AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX AND INTERDEPENDENT WORLD. HE

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NOTED THAT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS HE HAD HELD MEETINGS WITH THE ATTACHE COMMUNITY AT LARGE IN ORDER TO INSURE THAT PARTICULAR ISSUES WERE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD AND THAT INCOMPLETE OR INACCURATE MEDIA REPORTS WERE NOT THE SOLE BASIS FOR ATTACHE OPINIONS. HE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF ALL COUNTRIES, REGARDLESS OF SIZE OR DEVELOPMENT, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT RELATIONS WITH SOME COUNTRIES WERE PARTICULARLY CLOSE -- AND USED ARGENTINE COOPERATION WITH ITALY AND GREAT BRITAIN IN CYPRUS AS AN EXAMPLE.

3. (U) ON A PERSONAL NOTE, HE EXPLAINED THE RATIONALE FOR HIS 991104 REQUEST FOR RETIREMENT. IT WAS 8 YEARS TO THE DAY FROM THE TIME HE BECAME CHIEF OF STAFF, AND HE HAD PREVIOUSLY INFORMED PRESIDENT MENEM THAT HE INTENDED TO SUBMIT HIS REQUEST THAT DAY. HE VISITED THE FIRST UNIT HE HAD BEEN ASSIGNED TO, AND SIGNED THE REQUEST WHILE SEATED AT THE DESK HE HAD OCCUPIED AS A SECOND LIEUTENANT. GENERAL BALZA SAID THAT MENEM INSISTED THAT HE WOULD STAY ON UNTIL AT LEAST THE 991210 CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT. HE GAVE NO INDICATION WHO HIS SUCCESSOR WOULD BE, BUT EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE ARGENTINE ARMY WOULD CHART A SIMILAR COURSE TO THE PRESENT ONE.

(b)(1);1.4 (c)

(b)(3);10 USC 424;(b)(3);50 USC 3024(i)

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DRVD FM: DHS SCG, OCTOBER 97

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