SUBJ: DIA DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE NOTICE (DIN) (U)
DIADIN 158-10A (AS OF: 2000 EDT 7 JUN 78)
CUBA: DIPLOMATIC MISSION TO SOUTHERN AFRICA. (U)

1. (S/NFO) A CUBAN DIPLOMATIC TEAM HAS MADE THAT NATION'S FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO LESOTHO, AN AUTONOMOUS ENCLAVE LOCATED DEEP IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE TRIP MAY REFLECT LESOTHO'S DECISION TO BROADEN INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS, BUT IT ALSO INDICATES HAVANA IS CONTINUING TO EXPAND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, DESPITE GROWING WESTERN CONCERN ABOUT CUBAN WORLDWIDE INVOLVEMENT.

2. (S/NFO) A CUBAN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL TEAM MADE A GOOD-WILL VISIT TO MASERU, LESOTHO'S CAPITAL, DURING THE WEEK OF 29 MAY. THE CUBANS SAID THEY WISHED TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE COUNTRY AND TO INVESTIGATE THE POSSIBILITY OF AN "INCREASED" RELA-
TIONSHP. REPORTEDLY, THE CUBANS INITIATED THE TRIP, AND IT HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR SOME TIME.

3. (C/W/N/0/F/R/N) US OFFICIALS INDICATE THAT THE VISIT WAS UNUSUAL FOR LESOTHO, A WESTERN-ORIENTED COUNTRY, AND THE DECISION PROBABLY REFLECTS THE VIEWS OF A FEW, HIGH-LEVEL LESOTHO OFFICIALS WHO SYMPATHIZE WITH COMMUNIST AND RADICAL GOVERNMENTS. THE CUBAN VISIT MAY REFLECT A MASERU INITIATIVE TO BROADEN INTERNATIONAL CONTACTS AND TO ENHANCE LESOTHO'S IMAGE IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT OR WITH RADICAL AFRICA S. MASERU COULD ALSO BE ATTEMPTING TO WORRY WESTERN PARTNERS.

4. (S/N/O/F/R/N) FROM THE CUBAN PERSPECTIVE, THE VISIT INDICATES THAT HAVANA APPARENTLY IS DETERMINED TO CONTINUE TO EXPAND ITS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, DESPITE INCREASED EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN BY THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER WESTERN NATIONS REGARDING CUBAN WORLDWIDE INVOLVEMENT. ON 7 JUNE HAVANA ANNOUNCED IT WAS ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH LESOTHO AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL. SUCH OFFICIAL CONTACT BETWEEN CUBA AND LESOTHO WILL NO DOUBT ESPECIALLY DISPLEASE AND WORRY THE SOUTH AFRICANS. MOREOVER, A CUBAN OFFICE IN MASERU WILL PROVIDE HAVANA AND MOSCOW A POST TARGETED AGAINST PRETORIA.