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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with President France Albert Rene of
Seychelles (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Lawrence Eagleburger, Deputy Secretary of State
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Herman J. Cohen, Assistant Secretary of State
for African Affairs
Robert M. Gates, Deputy Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
James Moran, U.S. Ambassador to Seychelles
G. Philip Hughes, Executive Secretary
David Kaeuper, Director for Africa (notetaker)

President France Albert Rene
Danielle de St. Jorre, Foreign Minister
Marc Marengo, Charge d'Affaires

DATE, TIME July 20, 1989, 3:10 - 3:30 p.m.
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President opened the meeting by warmly welcoming President Rene to the United States, noting that he had never been to Seychelles but had visited Kenya and Somalia. President Rene said he had just arrived in the United States. His last visit to the United States was as a "visitor grantee" twenty years previously. (U)

The President said that he had just signed a Presidential Determination making Seychelles eligible for U.S. military assistance. He had been glad to do this and a modest sum of money was being made available to improve Seychelles' capability for policing illegal fishing in its coastal waters. The President said he understood that lease negotiations were about to begin on the U.S. satellite tracking facility and that he hoped these would go well, and congratulated President Rene on Seychelles' purchase of a very fine aircraft, the Boeing 767. (U)

President Rene responded that bilateral relations had been very good for the past several years and hoped they would remain so. The Seychelles was ready to begin negotiations on the satellite

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tracking facility agreement, and he appreciated U.S. assistance for improving Seychelles coastal patrols. He also hoped that "one day" the U.S. would take the initiative to make the Indian Ocean "a zone of peace" whether or not an "Indian Ocean Zone of Peace" conference were held anytime soon. (Ø)

The President answered that he wanted to make the whole world a zone of peace. He was very serious about working effectively with the Soviet Union and wanted some of our friends who were uncertain about it to understand this clearly. Improved U.S.-Soviet relations would be beneficial to all, especially smaller countries. Though the U.S. could not endorse the concept of nuclear free zones, we are very very serious about making and keeping peace. President Rene repeated that he hoped for an American initiative (on the Indian Ocean) if it could be managed. (U)

The President asked President Rene about the Seychelles' economy and economic health. President Rene said that tourism and fishing were the most important economic activities. Tourism was "not doing badly," and Seychelles was developing a fish processing industry based on tuna, much of it exported to the United States and to Puerto Rico. Seychelles was planning to buy its own fishing vessels. Seychelles policy on tourism was to restrict the total numbers of visitors at any given time to 4000 as this not only pleased the tourists but also attracted "better quality." Responding to several questions by the President, President Rene described the distribution of tourists in Seychelles, and noted that transportation to outlying islands was a problem which was being resolved, in part, by the purchase of two new Cessnas. (U)

Bringing the meeting to a close, the President asked President Rene if anything could be done to make his visit more pleasant. He thanked President Rene warmly for Seychelles' cooperation, and wished him a good visit to Colorado Springs, to the Boeing facilities in Seattle, and a successful, record-setting non-stop return to Seychelles aboard his country's new Boeing 767.

President Rene thanked the President for receiving him and said he was being treated very well with nothing more to be done or to ask for. (U)

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