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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telcon with Alberto Fujimori of Peru on April 20, 1992 (C)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Alberto Kenyo Fujimori, President of Peru
Interpreter: Lillian Nigaglioni
Notetaker: William T. Pryce/Robert B. Morley

DATE, TIME April 20, 1992, 2:58 - 3:30pm DST
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Mr. President, how are you?

President Fujimori: Good afternoon, Mr. President, it is a pleasure and an honor.

The President: Mr. President, I wanted to speak to you because I have been very concerned about the situation in Peru. We understand you have enormous problems and don't want to complicate things for you, but I don't want any misunderstanding between the United States and Peru at this time.

President Fujimori: I thank you for your personal interest and welcome and appreciate the opportunity to give some details about what is happening in Peru, including some things you might not have found out through normal channels. I'd like to give you a preview of what will happen and some ideas we have.

The President: I would be delighted to hear this from you. We are not without sympathy for your problems and have enormous respect for the progress you have made, but our big concern is the abandoning of democracy. I'm sure that you are aware of how we feel about democracy from your study of our history. I wanted to transmit this concern to you personally.

President Fujimori: Thank you. I want to reconfirm to you the same thing I have told the people of Peru and the international press. This situation is a temporary one. It is a transitory situation that will not last longer than 12 months. I am not going to become a dictator, my intention is to reinforce democracy. I want to democratize our institutions and break the cycle that is sinking Peru. This objective has been pursued for many years, promises have been made but the objective has never been accomplished. The process will terminate in 12 months in general elections in 1993. As I told you in September of 1991,

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it is not my intention to become a dictator but to strengthen democracy. The situation was threatening to undermine our economic policy.

The President: I see. I understand your number one priority was to reintegrate Peru with the IMF, the World bank, and the IDB. The United States and Japan took the lead in forming the support group to achieve this. We want to continue to help with the economic reforms, to cooperate in combatting narcotics, and to help you continue the good work you have begun on combatting terrorism. My basic problem is that your actions make it very difficult if not impossible to continue our programs. We are getting all sorts of threats from Congress to cut off aid to Peru. I would urge you to revert to democracy just as soon as you possibly can.

Is there a way you can take advantage of the presence of the OAS mission, to reach out to various groups in your country, all democratic forces, and come now to a democratic process? That is what we would like to urge you to do, if there is any way you can do that now.

President Fujimori: The OAS mission is arriving this evening in Lima. I am meeting with them tomorrow. Yesterday, no, three days ago, I announced we will be totally open to dialogue with all groups in the country in order to comply with the OAS mandate. We now have a national commission working on this. I think this is the best signal we are sending that we will cooperate with the OAS.

It is my intention to return democratic processes to Peru as soon as possible. As the press has reported, here in Peru we have freedom of the press, freedom of association, and no one is detained except one minister who is facing several charges. We have full liberties. There is total freedom, an excellent atmosphere for further dialogue.

The President: I understand the measures you took are well received by the people of Peru. I've seen strong support for what you feel you had to do. But the point I want to make is that outside Peru, and the OAS delegation will tell you, it is the opposite. There is very little understanding and very little support for the first steps you have taken. Let's hope that with the OAS visit, some accommodation can be reached. You need to get some agreement with the OAS mission.

I know you have relations with a number of countries, not only with the United States. But I felt I had to tell you that under our system, it will be extraordinarily difficult to move forward with normal relations unless this problem is solved and democracy is restored.

President Fujimori: On my behalf you can be assured, Mr. President, that I will make all efforts necessary to secure the success of the OAS mission. We agree on objectives and agree on the necessity to reestablish democracy in Peru. That's what the

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Peruvian people want -- profound reform in Peru. I would ask your help in getting information out on the situation here, that I have enormous support, that the people are challenging the old system, which was not working. This should not be interpreted as a coup like East Germany or the Soviet Union. Eighty or ninety percent of the people support me, and this should be considered.

The people and my government appreciate the support and friendship you have offered during 20 difficult months, but the situation is very special. I hope for your understanding. You should not have the least doubt that we intend to resolve the situation in the shortest possible time. We will democratize the country as soon as possible. I beg your support and hope you will help with the international financial institutions so they will not change their position of support for Peru.

The President: Let us put a lot of hope on the OAS mission for a solution to this situation. But on the face of it, what you have asked of me is not possible for me to do, because democracy has been set back. I have no reason to doubt your commitment to democracy. Let us hope you can reach a clear understanding with the OAS. I have to tell you that, under the status quo, normal relations are impossible for us, so let's hope the mission can change things, so we can put a different light on it.

President Fujimori: I want to give you a preview of our plans, but ask to keep it to yourself. I plan to make an announcement tomorrow over the national media. It has to do with a timetable for further events. First there will be a referendum on measures taken so far. This will be on June 30, 1992. Then a national debate will ensue on September 1, 1992, on amendments to the 1979 constitution. A national referendum will be held November 8 on amendments to the constitution, simultaneously with municipal and regional elections already scheduled. After that, we will select our new Congress on March 1, 1993. This means that within 11 months we will have reestablished total democracy. The people do not want to go back to the situation they had formerly. This way, the people of Peru will have full democracy and full participation in their government.

The President: Thank you for conveying this information to me. We will listen with full attention to your announcement. I know you are very busy, and wish you well, but I hope you do something that continues democracy. This is essential to the support we really want to continue.

President Fujimori: Sir, I would like personally to tell you, I appreciate the opportunity to describe to you and set out in detail what we are planning to do. I feel sure that once I give the timetable to the people and we establish contact with the OAS, we can be back in contact on serious problems such as narcotics and terrorism. You are acquainted with the drug situation. (You are) Not so familiar with terrorism. I want to address these problems in a framework of democracy and with the total support of the people.

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The President: I see. I hope you succeed, I hope your problems are resolved. Thanks very much for taking a call at this time. Good luck.

President Fujimori: Thank you very much, and good by.

-- End of Conversation --

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