

tion to Israel become initial member org. Once org est question of additional membership will be for org members to decide.

DULLES

No. 120

780.5/2-2753: Telegram

*The Ambassador in Iraq (Berry) to the Department of State*¹

SECRET

BAGHDAD, February 27, 1953—9 a. m.

1053. Because I had asked him directly and in strictest confidence Turk Chargé Umar informed me of recent official conversation re MEDO with Foreign Minister Suwaidi undertaken under instructions from Turk Foreign Office. Following was substance:

1. Turkish Chargé told Suwaidi MEDO would comprise (a) countries of Middle East; (b) countries bordering on Middle East; (c) countries which can contribute materially to defense of Middle East.

Immediate task of MEDO would be (a) to prepare a plan of defense and (b) to précise what is lacking in each participating country to carry out defense plan.

2. Turk Chargé said United Kingdom in favor establishing headquarters MEDO in Cyprus but Turkey of opinion that it should be located in Turkey and prepared offer its territory. Each country participating in organization should be 100 percent equal and in Turk view there must be able total abandonment of discrimination between "founders" and "participants" as contained original MEC proposals.

3. At end this presentation Tawfiq Pasha remarked "our ally and friend, the United Kingdom, has never explained MEDO to us so objectively and fully." He said his own thoughts had been in terms of an organization larger than just the Arab States, perhaps including Iran, Afghanistan, India, and Indonesia. Turk Chargé replied he not speaking of an Asian pact but rather a workable defense organization in which each participating country would have direct interest in and make direct contribution toward Middle East defense.

4. Tawfiq Pasha said not a single Arab Government could agree individually to enter into discussion on MEDO so poorly was MEDO received by the Arab public. It was necessary find camouflage and he felt best approach was study by Arab League.

5. Turk Chargé replied that United States and United Kingdom pushing Egypt forward as spearhead of MEDO but he wanted Tawfiq Pasha to understand Turkey opposes this policy of any grouping having Egypt as center. Turk felt MEDO should include Arab States, France, the United States and United Kingdom but

¹ Repeated to Ankara as telegram 25.