**09OSLO692**

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VZCZCXYZ0016 PP RUEHWEB DE RUEHNY #0692 3101531 ZNY CCCCC ZZH P 061531Z NOV 09 FM AMEMBASSY OSLO TO RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 0121 RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0451 RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7941 INFO RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 1081 RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY 2570 RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 3086 RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 4418 RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY 0405 RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1373

 C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 000692 SIPDIS STATE FOR PRM/ANE: RKINSEY; KATHMANDU FOR M WEINBERG E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/06/2019 TAGS: BT IN NP PGOV PREF PREL NO SUBJECT: NORWEGIANS RECEPTIVE ON BHUTAN REFUGEES AND CORE GROUP GOALS REF: STATE 113863 Classified By: Political and Economic Counselor Cherrie S. Daniels for reasons 1.4(b) and (d) [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/09oslo692#par1) 1. (C) Poloff met on November 6 with Lasse Bjorn Johannessen, Senior Advisor in the Asia Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), to deliver reftel points. Johannessen recently returned from a tour as the Deputy Chief of Mission for the Norwegian Embassy in New Delhi. Johannessen said that the Bhutanese refugee issue was one that had been brought up several times by the Norwegian Ambassador with the government of Bhutan (GOB) on his three visits there. The typical response given by the GOB was that the refugees were not Bhutanese citizens, and that political problems with the government of Nepal prevented the GOB from having a proper dialogue about the issue--excuses which Johannessen characterized as without merit. [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/09oslo692#par2) 2. (C) Johannessen said the Norwegian Counselor for Health Issues resident in New Delhi would be going to Nepal soon, to present the GOB with $300,000 which would push a health fund established by many countries over the $24 million mark, which in turn would allow the GOB to begin spending the income from that fund on vaccinations. Johannessen said that this might give him some leverage to at least raise the issue. [Â¶](http://www.bhutan-research.org/us-diplomatic-cables-on-bhutan/09oslo692#par3) 3. (C) Regarding reftel demarche points, Johannessen was receptive, but noncommittal and clearly somewhat pessimistic, commenting that he could not understand why we were interested in the plight of these refugees. He asked how many refugees the U.S. had accepted, as he said he recalled we were going to accept "at least 20,000," but noted that only 20,000 had been accepted overall. He did say that the Norwegian government would certainly be interested in hearing more from Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Witten during the Core Group meetings we are setting up in Kathmandu and New Delhi. WHITE