June 25, 2018

ET
BVG
G
A

DOCID: FIG_EDVA_00005134
Subj: All good to go
Date: July 27

G: One of first documents where project is mentioned. “I had a detailed discussion with my MF last night.” This email in itself doesn’t say a lot to you?

MF; is that how you’re usually referred to? No idal.

DOCID0000472: July 29: Met with MC? Did you have an understanding of who the MC is?
MF: Yes, eventually. G: Do you recall who? M: Yes, I believe it was the foreign minister.

G: in addition that to how mentioned here, is that how he became to be referred to?

From the beginning were the Turkish officials involved in this way?

M: There was a time early on, that there was some discussion with Bijan about who would pay for it. Bijan had relayed that wheter GOT or Ekim; and I was like whatever.

G: Apart from who was going to pay for it; some pretty highlevel officials within Turkey were involved?

M: Yes.

And that was tru from the beginning of your involvement?

M: Yes, he talked about Ekim in a way that he was well connected; I understood from Bijan that there were discussions at the highest level of the government.

G: in context of this project.

M: Yes

G: So not just Ekim’s connections generally, but the project.

M: More or less

G: Why the qualifier

M: I didn’t talk directly with Ekim so..
G: We’re just interested in what you were told by Bijan in this context.

M: That Ekim had connections to senior members of the government, all the way up to Erdogan.

G: And that those connections were involved in this project?

M: Yes, I believed that.

G: Based on what.

M: In the conversations I had with Bijan, I understood it to be initially, as he was describing Ekim.. know him from Narwuz, Turkish-American biz counsel. This has real potential to be a longer term project, and the visibiltiy of this project is at the highest levels of Turkish government. And Ekim had this project. At least initially.

G: Would it be fair to say that from your understanding of conversations with Bijan, did it appear or was it your understanding that Ekim was acting as the go between from those top-level foreign officials and this project that you’ll be undertaking.

M: Yes.

G: Is this an example of Ekim acting as a go between between your project and the Turkish government?

M: Yes.

G: Mentions in the document “thank you for your elegant outline.” If you turn back to the .. ones with the bullet point.[can’t find document]

G: Shows his copy…

G: Your copied on this; it says he and you had discussed this Truth campaign and these are the basic bullets. IS that something that you discussed with Bijan.

M: I believe we did.

G: To best of recollection?

M: Yes. It’s a basic assessment process for a proposal.

G: Then August 10; “starts with gentlemen” just finished in Ankara.

Here, this MFA Kavasulu. He was the minister of foreign affairs. It says, I have a green light to discuss confidentiality, budget scope.” “is it your understanding that the green light was coming from these folks (MFA, Economy).
M: It is. Not sure I saw this email; I just know that in our conversations and the early phase of this thing, I think at that time if you had asked me, who doing it on behalf of, I’m not sure if were doing it on behalf of Gov of Turkey or Ekim, but I’m trusting you to do it the right way.

G: I understand. Your understanding was that whether it was through Ekim or someone, you understand this involved highest levels of Turkish government, is that right?

M: It is.

G: And green light; does that refresh your memory? Regarding the money

M: I think at this point of time it became clear we’re going to get documents.

G: I understand this: From your conversations with Bijan when he’s telling you we got this contract; from those conversations did you understand that this contract was whether directly or through Ekim, was it with the government of Turkey?

M: I would say it was in support of Government of Turkey. Would not necessarily say it was in direct support of Turkey. It was with there understanding, and involvement.

G: With their involvement?

M: Absolutely. The way it was described to me what we were going to be doing. That all transpired in various conversations at the beginning.

G: Was it your understanding that the initial approval for this project was coming from the Gov of Turkey and in fact these high-level officials.

M: Yeah

BVG: If you recall one of the first meetings in the middle of August there was a meeting with Jim Court, Sphere, question is whether recall being in August a preliminary meeting.

M: I don’t recall a meeting. I know Bijan had spoke about different people that he used prior.

BVG: Some of the emails show discussions that it’s only the three of us that know about this project; do you recall not bringing in other people into the fold until you received an approval; the green light?

M: We had talked about until we were certain that it was going to happen; 100 percent, keep it small.

BVG: But do you recall in terms of the decision to start bringin people in the fold, hearing that GOT had provided some sort of approval.
M: Not sure what you’re asking. If you’re asking, let’s keep it at us 3 and then once it was approved . . .

M: I want to make sure… you’re going through a sequence and with this particular green light thing, there was a point in time where Bijan said we’re going to approve this, may have been a phone call, maybe an email.

G: I understand how you have it compartmentalized, but with the emails I show you, you may not have been copied on them . . . .

M: He started using this Virtru thing too. Not sure if I was ever able to get this open on an iPhone. For Virtru had to have special permissions.

G: And that Virtru software had been something typically used before this project?

M: Do not remember using it before/

G: Do you recall any convo w/ Bijan about why he started using it?

M: No, just that it was secure means of communicating.

G: In terms of how your understanding of the project evolved, may help me understand who the conversation with Bijan evolved. Your understanding is that it was approved by GOT?

M: My understanding is that it was apporved by someone within GOT. Someone about GOT. My understanding is that Ekim was talking to someone in GOT at fairly seniro levels. I didn’t relaly care who was going to pay for it; my belief was that it didn’t really matter to me; we got the contract, good. It’s certainly working on behalf of the government of Turkey. Working in support of them. That’s how I would describe it. Working directly for them? Can’t say I know that. Working on their behalf.

ET: In light of that, your understanding was the money was flowing from GOT; either directly, or through Ekim’s company?

M: Not sure I gave it any thought. I don’t know whether there was an article, or maybe we’d talked about it where Ekim confirmed somewhere in some comm that the money did not come from GOT; after election, or statement he made, not sure where that information came from. When I heard that I thought, okay, well that makes this… the FARA stuff was happening. I wasn’t sure where the money came from other than Ekim. Whehter the gov was paying him.

G: Who is paying is relevant, but doesn’t really matter for our purposes. You’ve already said was working on behalf of / to support the GOT.

M: That was pretty clear.

G: And to be clear that was clear from emails/ other comms with Bijan?
M: Yes.

G: Had the Aug 10 email that we were just looking at; that lays out the bullets. That is the one where Alptekin writes back and says met with MOFA; so he’s receptive. Then on Aug 11, you’ve got … tracking on the discussions and where this are. [Shows email . . .CONFIDENCE THROUGH CLARITY CAMPAIGN subj.] Go back to the July email. You’ll see at the one on July 30 - TRUTH CAMPAIGN, with bullet points. And then there is the intervals where talk about -- Gov of Turkey is giving the green light if you will. And now have August 11th email that now is under subject OPERATION CONFIDENCE. You had earlier said that from the beginning it was the same project. Is that right?

M: Yes.

G: Is this an example of how it stayed the same project?

M: Yes. I’d call this Confidence.

G: Regardless of the name, is the project the same.

M: Yes.

G: And does this email demonstrate that for you?

M: Yes, and side bar; where he talks about having done this before -- this was FIG’s first project. So Ekim took the Azerbaijan project he did with Woolsey and applied it here. That’s likely what he means when he says done this before. I believe that Bijan had actually showed me the video that Bijan did on that project. So to answer specific question - yes, this is the same thing. And I believe that Bijan applied template from previous business deal to this. That’s why this part, we have done this before successfully -- we had not.

G: More details on Azerbaijan?

M: It was via Nawruz connection. Lack of relationship between Az and US, and somehow Bijan got involved. May have been when he first got out of gov, but I know he did it with JW.

G: Aug 11 email, couple of things to note: now talking about a Dutch company. This is what you’re talking about where it wasn’t clear who was paying, whether Ekium and Dutch company.

M: Yes

G: Did having Dutch company change the project in anyway.

M: I don’t think it did.

G: Is that based on convos with Bijan, your impressssion., something else?
M: I don’t believe it changed anything. I went and looked at Inovo website. I’m not sure that that jumped out at me. Not sure that made any difference./

G: To be clear; that it made any difference between what the project was and what it was going to be.

M: Yes, like you said, wouldn’t have mattered if engaged by milk man. Was about restroign confidence in government turkey in the US.

G: Mostly concerned with what said earlier, about this being on behalf of or for the benefit for Gov of Turkey. Still fair to say?

M: No change there.

G: That to me is a critical fact. Very important that I not encourage you to say that. That if that’s the case, based on comms with Bijan, when I’m asking these questions; that’s where I’m headed with that.

M: To summarize - the conversation about who was going to pay went back and forth. During this period it was very clear that Ekim was engaging senior officals of the government; conversations about Erdogan and MOFA, and Minister of Economy. And that the overall intent was to restore confidence between gov of Turkey and gov US through Ekims business and government contracts.

G: And so, as you were saying, your focus was not on the Dutch client?

M: My focus was on the fact that Ekim was the face we were working wht. It was pretty clear that he wasn’t Dutch. I don’t want to be too fecetious. I’m not from Delaware, but that’s where our business is. In a way there was a naiveté in the technical business stuff.

ET: When said restoring confidence in gov to gov relationships, is that distinct from busines restorartion.

M: All one in the same to me.

ET: But all work seemed to be about Gulen, right?

M: As were going through project, it changed to be about Gulen.

ET: It seemed to be about Gulen from the beginning, the project document was all about all Gulen/

M: Yeah, his name came up; his involvement; causing the rift between gov.

BVG: Can you think of a single doc or product from the project that didn’t deal with Gulen?
M: Everything I saw seemed to be; I didn’t see the video. All came down to him. Not need to speak to a biz group and tell them how wonderful things are.

G: Do you recall, you were saying that whether it was from the start, it became more and more apparent, that Gulen was the focus of this project.

M: He was a component from the beginning; the narrowing down . . . it was a 90 day project, the narrowing down was focusing on him and assess what could or could not be done.

G: And was this meeting that you had in NY with the Turkish officials, was that in keeping with this understanding that started from the beginning that this was on behalf of or for the benefit for GOT.

M: Believe that it was; believe Ekim wanted to show had the right connections the right people; believe he wanted to show that; wanted to get their confirmation about that. That they were satisfied that Ekim had the right people and that this was going in the right direction.

G: Where did you get that understanding?

M: The dynamics of the meeting and Bijan caveatting the meeting, wanting to get the right people there, timing, looking at dynamics of the room; seemed to me like Ekim’s relationship with the son-in-law was pretty good. Knew each other more than knew MOFA. That sort of dynamic gave me the impression that they were satisfied. That the gov of turkey officials were satisfied; with what Ekim had presented about us. Just in the back and forth that had talked to me about; this has visibility at highest levels of government. Bijan - our project has visibility at highest levels.

G: They were satisfied?

M: Yes.

G: Was there some kind of convo or discussion about how going to interact with Turkish officials in context of project?

M: May have been TPs.

[Rob prompts: may have been plan for lunch.]

M: There was a plan; believe Bijan and Brian took a train up that day; may have actually taken train back. Believe they took a train up that day. Believe there may have been TPs for that meeting. And then during that day . . . Woolsey already up there with his wife; didn’t know what he was doing at the time, but found out after had met with Turks.

G: That meeting, planned lunch beforehand, TPs, all to do with meeting with Turks?
M: I remember meeting at hotel with Bijan beforehand. Got into hotel, went up to room… bijan, myself, W there. Talked for 10-15 minutes before Turks showed up.

G: What did you talk about?

M: How going to choreograph meeting?

G: Choreograph vis-à-vis the project. Fair to say?

M: Choreograph was have you spoken to Ekim; working for him; want to make sure the right things are stated; 5 Ws. Nothing really specific.

G: So I’m clear on it. Ministers weren’t just bystanders to you making presentation to Ekim over the project. It was so you could make presentation to the ministers?

M: This wasn’t, hey can you stop back. This was we are providing an update on Project Confidence to these government officials.

G: Your impression was that they were satisfied?

M: I walked away that they were satisfied.

G: Conversation you had were about project Confidence?

M: Yes

G: And Project was same project from the get go.

M: Yes.

ET: Do you remember any feedback that FIG received?

M: Don’t recall that; don’t recall the direction going that way; more a discussion about what were doing. Nothing were they were giving me feedback. A couple of times where discussed in Turkish; what Bijan may have provided to Bijan after; I don’t know. Think Bijan left with them.

G: Mentioned beofre that this was FIGs first contract/engament. So pretthy important.

M: I looked at it as let’s make sure everything is right. Be professional. Could become bigger project down the road. We had another one that was consemated at roughly the same time; think it was Sep, Oct. Had to deal wit real estate.

G: From emails, appears that this engagemnet was disclosed or other folks brought in, only after changed to a Dutch company, rather than Project Truth, where more openly discussed with ministers or Ekim. Does that ring any bells / mean anything?
M: Doesn’t mean anything. Doesn’t ring any bells. Keeping the group small was about not wasting anybody’s time if not going anywhere.

G: Ever recall anything about Israeli company?

M: I don’t recall anything like that. I don’t.

G: So if we can turn to your Statement of Facts. Last paragraph - Statement of Facts

G: Going to turn to FARA filing itself and circumstances around that.

ET: Just one more email; from August 8, 2016. Re: Truth. Another example of Government of Turkey involvement?

M: Yes.

ET: Believe have said aware of two payments of $40k each that made to Inovo.

M: I am aware.

ET: Ever aware of them being referred to as lobbying or PR refunds that were not performed?

M:

ET: TO best of your knowledge, were they refunds?

M: Not sure I paid attention to that.

ET: Anything that makes you think they were refunds?

M: Nothing that I’m aware of that would make them refunds.’

ET: From the earliest days, Ekim was going to get 20 percent.

M: Right, going to give 20 percent for services.

ET: okay… need to strike while iron hot; before the election. You’re the iron right? You said that last time.

M: The context as a whole and my involvement. My connections to getting something published.

BVG: Well Bijan wasn’t the iron. Ekim wasn’t the iron.

M: No certainly not.
ET: Thanks for cooperation; not trying to get any admissions out of you; not getting new false statements. But need to ask about some of those statements. Believe that previously told us: done for or on behalf of gov of turkey and officials had awareness, feedback and were given updates. Before FARA filing ever tell Covington attorneys was done for Turkeys benefit or on their behalf?

M: Don’t believe I used those words.

ET: Did you ever say that it was for helping the Government of Turkey?

M: Don’t think I ever said it as strongly as I’m saying it now; don’t think I ever used those words.

ET: Reads false statement para 5: “FIG did not know whether or the extent to which Rep of Turk involved in project”; is that the basis of the false statement; the stuff we just discussed?

M: Yes.

ET: Anything else that would make this a false statement?

M: I don’t think so.

BVG: To clarify; if there is maybe a question that we didn’t ask, please flag.

M: I told this to you the other day, I don’t go over the FARA filing with Bijan at all. I don’t know if that makes any different to you all. But it wasn’t ... learn a lot of things in hindsight. Would it have adjusted what I, how I stated, how I filled out, can’t say that it may have adjusted what I filled out; cant say it would or would not have.

ET: Just asking that what I learned from you is the basis for the false statement. So in terms of op-ed, was written because there wasn’t any deliverables yet under the project.

M: I said there was previous discussions about the op-ed for the project.

ET: But you and Bijan did not previously discuss this specific op-ed and you did not see the draft of the op-ed a head of time.

M: That’s right.

ET: Here is an email. Is this the first time you saw this?

M: Think maybe I saw it directly from Bijan. Remember receiving the op-ed from Bijan; not sure if this is the email.

BVG: Do not remember drafting?
M: No.

BVG: Do not remember doing any specific brainstorming about this op-ed?

M: No.

ET: “Op-ed written in the Hill was his own . . .” Is that basis of statement?

M: Yes.

ET: All work was about Gulen, all meetings about Gulen. No meetings with business community to help business community. Basis of the statement?

M: Don’t follow your question. [Reads para. 5.b.]

ET: Are the facts that all work was focused on Gulen, was that reason for false statement?

BVG: key word is FOCUS. Was it false to say that FOCUS was on business community?

M: Yes, that’s false. At this point, focus was on Gulen.

ET: Did ever tell Covington attorneys that there were two separate projects involving Turkey?

M: No. Not aware of two separate projects. At that time I was not aware of two separate projects.

G: What we’re getting at is the essential facts are

ET: Like to tell you what questions going to ask.

R: Explain what it’s going to look like.

G: Explains GJ process.

ET: Tell you what questions are:

1. State name and spell
2. How employed
3. What job retire from
4. Also worked in private sector
5. Involved in Flynn intel Group
6. When was FIG created
7. Still in existence
8. When FIG ceased operations
9. Who was FIG Vice Chairman
10. What did Bijan do
11. Aware of Project FIG involved with Turkey
12. How did you first become aware
13. What stage was project at when Bijan first approached
14. Who if anyone Bijan told you he’d already spoken to about it
15. Who is Ekim
16. Before project, what relationship if any did Bijan have with Ekim
17. How did they know each other
18. What comms if any are you of Bijan having with Ekim about project
19. How did you know those convos took place
20. During what time period was this
21. How often comms
22. What methods used to communicated Bijan / Ekim
23. During initial convo with Bijan about project what was focal point of project
24. Did that focal point change at any point during the project?
   a. Initial focus was business community -
25. Focal point for the work done for the project
26. What work if any done about researching state of biz climate in turkey
27. What meetings done with biz groups
28. What work about investments in Turkey
29. What work done to improve biz climate in Turkey for US/foreign businesses
30. Ever heard country of Israel mentioned
31. Ever heard that country of Israel would benefit from project
32. During project what doing day to day in life?
33. When began traveling with Trump?
34. For how long travel with him?
35. Who was manager of project within FIG?
   a. Initially Bijan and then would assign Mike Boston as lead
36. Change to: Who oversaw FIG’s work on the project.
37. Who at FIG was the most knowledgeable about the project?
   a. Bijan had fingerprints all over it; in Comms
38. What foreign govs if any were involved in the project?
39. How was the government of Turkey involved?
40. Who was intended beneficiary of the project?
41. What officials of gov of turkey were involved, to your knowledge
42. Whether Turkish gov officials provided some direction on the project
43. Who at FIG if anyone discussed the involvement of Turkish gov officials with you
   a. Bijan
44. Do you recall anyone bragging about high-level officials in the project?
45. G: From the beginning to the end? M: Yes pretty much. G: On weekly telephone calls, he continued to relay that officials were satisfied. M: Yes. G: That was basically the purpose of the weekly calls, right? G: That’s what I viewed those weekly calls as; brief
Ekim so he could update Turkish officials. He’d give us feedback on those conversations with government officials. That interaction was clear to me that keeping not only us informed, but Turkish officials.

46. Questions on funding:
47. Originally what was planned source of funding for project
48. How do you know that
49. Whether that planned source of funding changed
50. what was new source of funding for the project
51. Where was Inovo incorporated / based
52. When the source of funding changed, what else about the project changed?
53. How did the scope of the project changed
54. FIG’s role changed?
55. Timeline changed?
56. Whether before or after heard anything about FIG performing separate project w/ gov of Turkey?
57. Separate project with Ekim? Inovo? About radical Islam?
58. Anything about FIG refunding money for Ekim for PR / lobbying?
59. FIG refunding money to anyone ICW the project?
60. Did you become aware of two payments of 40 k to Inovo
61. Whether those payments were refunds for lobbying / PR or refunds for anything?
62. NYC meetgin - aware of meeting?
63. Related to Turkey project?
64. Who attended that meeting?
65. Who set up the meeting?
66. Do you recall having met Ekim prior to the meeting?
67. Purpose of the meeting - Whether purpose of the meeting was to demonstrate FIG’s capabilities to Turkish Government officials
   a. Introduce leadership team and provide update
68. What potential additional business was discussed at the meeting?
69. Who did most of the talking at the meeting?
70. What focus of convo was?
71. Goal was of the Turkish officials regarding Gulen
72. What deliverables if any as part of project were discussed?
   a. ET: At that meeting were Congressional hearings discussed? not aware
   b. ET: Op-eds? Not aware
   c. M:
73. Conversations about delieverables for the project at FIG?
   a. Types of conversations about what we could do. Him driving the video, Gulenopolgy game, op-eds that we could write. Don’t recall engaging Congress as a specific thing. May have talked about it in a general sense.
74. Update calls
75. After meeting on 19th any convos with Ekim?
76. How often?
77. Who else from FIG participated?
78. What was subject matter of work FIG provided on projets?
79. Working on other issues other than Gulen on the project?
80. What did Ekim saying he was doing with information?
81. Which Turkish gov officials was he passing the officials?
   a. Engaged with MOFA, previous individuals whom he was talking with; Economy, mentioned Prime Minister’s awareness
   b. ET: Reads Oct 22 - text, walked him through . . . brings up discussing with Minister of Foreign Affairs.
82. What feedback if any receive during these calls?
83. From whom was the feedback?
84. How did you know that?
85. Other than participating in these calls, what work did he provide on the project?
   a. M: Provided advice on assistance on how to negotiate with the Turkish government
86. What contacts if any between FIG and professional staffers on the project?
   a. At time, not aware had contact with congressional staffers. As I sit here now, know that Homeland Security senior staffer -- Miley or something like that.
87. Briefly described the circumstances of those contacts
88. GOING TO SKIP CONGRESSIONAL STAFFER QUESTIONS
89. What op-eds if any were published as part of the project?
90. Give op-ed; do you recognize, where was it published, when was it published, title, whose name listed as the author, how did first find out op-ed was in the works
91. Conversations if any had about writing this op-ed before receiving email with draft attached
92. What Bijan said to you if anything about why he drafted the op-ed.
   a. M: Had discussions about writing this op-ed as a product for this project
   b. ET: Was it drafted because no other deliverables had been produced on the Turkey project at that point? Know that had discussed them as a product.
93. Why published when it was published?
   a. M: Thought it might have a great impact. Could get it published beforehand because of the environment. Felt like it was going to be easier to get it published before.
   b. ET: Also true that thought it would have greater impact? M: Yes, would get wider readership.
   c. ET: Is that because of your high-profile during election?
94. G: Ask about initial LDA. Two particular statements, Robert Kelley being the lobbyist and the other being the purpose of the lobbying being these two senate and house bills.
   a. M: Took it at face value.

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