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EUROPEAN COUNCIL, DUBLIN
29/30 NOVEMBER 1979

POLITICAL COOPERATION

Brief by Foreign and Commonwealth Office

Briefing on Political Cooperation subjects is provided
as follows:

Annex A Rhodesia
Annex B Iran.

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ANNEX A

RHODESIA

OBJECTIVE

1. To brief partners on the current situation and obtain their support.

POINTS TO MAKE

2. Grateful for support so far given by the Nine.

BACKGROUND

3. The strength of support for the UK attempts to solve the Rhodesia problem varies within the Nine. Some, eg France and Germany, have supported us strongly, whereas others such as Denmark and the Netherlands have been less helpful. However, on 20 November the Foreign Ministers of the Nine agreed to the following statement on Rhodesia:

"The Foreign Ministers of the Nine warmly welcome the progress made at the Constitutional Conference at Lancaster House. They commend the parties to the negotiations for the spirit of compromise they have shown and they recognise the role played by other African leaders who have encouraged the efforts to achieve a settlement.

The Ministers note the agreement reached on an independence constitution providing for genuine majority rule, and on arrangements for the holding of free and fair elections and for the administration of Rhodesia until these take place.

The Conference has now moved to its final stage - the effort to agree on proposals for a ceasefire.

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The Foreign Ministers of the Nine note that the British Government has put forward proposals to this end. They hope that agreement will quickly be negotiated on the basis of these proposals so that the present destructive conflict will be brought to a speedy end. This would clear the way for elections and bring about the emergence of a free and independent Zimbabwe to take its rightful place as an accepted member of the world community."

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ANNEX B

IRAN

OBJECTIVE

1. To maintain the Nine's solidarity with the United States.

POINTS TO MAKE

2. The Nine can make an important contribution in Iran by sticking together to add to the pressure on the Iranian authorities. As well as helping bring the occupation of the Embassy to an early end, the Nine's solidarity is important as it helps reassure the United States and makes it easier for them to maintain their current restraint towards Iran.

BACKGROUND

3. Representatives of the Nine in Tehran have made a number of démarches to the Iranian authorities calling on them to release American hostages and restore their Embassy to the United States Government. On 20 November the Foreign Ministers of the Nine made the following statement on Iran:

"Ministers of the Nine meeting in Brussels on 20 November considered the latest developments in Iran. They expressed their deep concern at the fact that the Iranian authorities have not fulfilled their obligations under the Vienna Convention and have not given appropriate protection to both the staff and the premises of the American Embassy in Tehran. They have already made their concern known to the Iranian
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authorities on several occasions through diplomatic channels.

At their meeting today, the Ministers recalled that in 1976 the European Council expressly condemned any attempt to exert pressure on governments by the taking of hostages. They consider that whatever the nature of the dispute between Iran and the United States the continued holding of diplomatic personnel of the Embassy of a foreign State as hostages and the threat to put them on trial is a breach of international law and as such must be rejected by the Governments of the Nine and the international Community as a whole. The Ministers reject this violation of international law and call upon the Iranian Government to release all the hostages."

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