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SIC I9M/ZAC

NAC: 3 SEPTEMBER: U S REQUEST FOR SEA-LIFT ASSISTANCE

SUMMARY

1. UK, ITALY AND PORTUGAL RESPOND POSITIVELY TO U S REQUEST FOR SEA-LIFT ASSISTANCE. OTHERS STILL CONSIDERING IT. SPAIN AND FRANCE COMPLAIN ABOUT THE USE OF NAC FOR THIS PURPOSE. ROBUST RESPONSE BY U S, SUPPORTED BY UK, ITALY AND DENMARK.

DETAIL

2. FOLLOWING UP HIS LETTER OF 27 AUGUST, TAFT (U S) CONFIRMED THAT A SHORT-FALL OF 28 CARGO SHIPS HAD BEEN IDENTIFIED IN THE SEA-LIFT TO SAUDI ARABIA, AND ASKED THAT ALLIES SHOULD PROVIDE SUITABLE VESSELS ON A COST-FREE BASIS OR DEFRAY THE COST OF U S CHARTERS. HE RECOGNISED THAT THIS WOULD CAUSE FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES, BUT STRESSED THE LEVEL OF EFFORT ALREADY BEING MADE BY THE U S AND THE NEED TO SPREAD THE BURDEN AMONG THOSE BENEFITTING FROM THE OPERATION.

3. FULCI (ITALY) SAID THAT HIS AUTHORITIES HAD DECIDED TO DO ALL THAT THEY COULD TO HELP THE U S, AND CONTACTS WERE ALREADY UNDERWAY TO DETERMINE THE AVAILABILITY OF ITALIAN RO-RO SHIPS WITH A TRANSATLANTIC CAPABILITY. ONE ITALIAN RO-RO WAS ALREADY BEING LOADED WITH U S EQUIPMENT, AND ANOTHER WOULD DEPART SHORTLY FOR THE U S. THE U S HAD AN OPTION ON A THIRD. A FOURTH, CURRENTLY CHARTERED TO THE UK FOR EXERCISE TEAMWORK, COULD BE RELEASED IF THE UK AGREED. ONCE THE U S HAD DECIDED ITS DETAILED REQUIREMENTS, FURTHER SHIPS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE.

4. I SPOKE AS INSTRUCTED, ANNOUNCING THE PROVISION OF TWO RO-RO SHIPS. FARIA (PORTUGAL) SAID THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WOULD BE SENDING A NAVAL TRANSPORT TO SUPPORT THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE, AND THAT IN RESPONSE TO THE U S REQUEST, THEY WOULD BE PROVIDING TWO RO-RO SHIPS

AND A CONTAINER VESSEL ON CHARTER TO THE U S. BREMER (LUXEMBOURG) SAID HIS AUTHORITIES HAD NO SHIPS BUT WOULD SHARE THE COSTS OF ALLIED OPERATIONS.

5. BIERRING (DENMARK) SAID THAT THE U S REQUEST WAS UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION IN COPENHAGEN, ALTHOUGH THE U S HAD ALREADY CHARTERED TWO DANISH RO-RO SHIPS, FOSTERVOLL (NORWAY) JACBOVITS (NETHERLANDS), BAECHMANN (GERMANY) AND SCHELLINCK (BELGIUM) TOOK THE SAME LINE.

6. CAJAL (SPAIN) SAID THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WERE NOT IN A POSITION TO GIVE A POSITIVE ANSWER. SPAIN WAS ALREADY MAKING A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO THE UN EFFORT. THEY WERE STUDYING THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER ASSISTANCE. HE COMPLAINED THAT THE NAC WAS NOT THE RIGHT FORUM FOR THE U S REQUEST, WHICH SHOULD HAVE BEEN SENT DIRECTLY TO CAPITALS. HE ALSO SAID THAT HIS AUTHORITIES WANTED MORE INFORMATION FROM THE U S ON THE OBJECTIVES OF DESERT SHEILD. SPAIN HAD BEEN ASKED TO COOPERATE IN A MILITARY EFFORT BUT THE AIMS WERE NOT CLEAR. ROBIN (FRANCE) AGREED WITH SPAIN THAT THE NAC WAS NOT THE RIGHT FORUM TO DEAL WITH THE U S REQUEST. FRANCE WOULD BE RESPONDING BILATERALLY.

7. TAFT (U S) THANKED THOSE COUNTRIES THAT HAD REPLIED POSITIVELY. HE ADDED THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION ABOUT THE SUITABILITY OF THE NAC FOR CONSULTATION ON THESE MATTERS. THE U S INTENDED TO CONTINUE TO USE IT FOR THIS PURPOSE. I AGREED, WITH STRONG SUPPORT FROM ITALY, DENMARK AND THE SECRETARY GENERAL. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, TAFT SAID THAT HE WOULD ASK WASHINGTON ABOUT BRIEFING ON THE HELSINKI SUMMIT. HE HAD NO DETAILS AT PRESENT.

8. FULCI (ITALY) SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED BY HIS AUTHORITIES THAT AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF EC FOREIGN MINISTERS WAS BEING CONVENED IN ROME ON 7 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS THE GULF CRISIS, ESPECIALLY AID TO COUNTIRES AFFECTED BY SANCTIONS.

ALEXANDER

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