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TO ROUTINE FCO
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INFO ROUTINE BRITISH INTERESTS SECTION, BUENOS AIRES, WASHINGTON.

ARGENTINA

1. THE ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER MADE A BRIEF TECHNICAL STOPOVER IN MADRID ON 29 FEBRUARY EN ROUTE TO MEXICO FROM GENEVA. HE SPOKE TO JOURNALISTS AT THE AIRPORT, AND ALL THE MAIN NEWSPAPERS CARRIED REPORTS ON INSIDE PAGES. THESE HEADLINED HIS REMARKS ON THE FALKLANDS, ALTHOUGH SR CAPUTO ANSWERED ONLY ONE QUESTION ON THE SUBJECT. ASKED WHAT HOPE THERE WAS FOR RECOVERING THE FALKLANDS IF THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY WAS NOT OPEN TO DISCUSSION AS FAR AS BRITAIN WAS CONCERNED, SR CAPUTO SAID THAT THIS WAS ALSO THE CASE FOR ARGENTINA. NEGOTIATIONS WERE THEREFORE IN A HIGHLY COMPLEX SITUATION, BUT HE BELIEVED THAT THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAD FOUND A WAY ROUND THE PROBLEM IN QUOTE AN ANSWER UNQUOTE SENT TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON 16 FEBRUARY. CAPUTO APOLOGISED THAT HE COULD NOT GIVE MORE DETAILS, OUT OF COURTESY TOWARDS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. BUT HE SAID HE HOPED THAT THE EFFORT OF IMAGINATION WHICH ALL WERE MAKING, TOGETHER WITH GOODWILL, MIGHT RESOLVE THE DELICATE AND COMPLEX SITUATION CREATED BY THE FALKLANDS PROBLEM.

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