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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW: ITALIAN PRESS REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT RECEIVED DETAILED COVERAGE IN THE ITALIAN PRESS. ADMIRATION FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S AUTHORITATIVE PERFORMANCE AND THE RECEPTION GIVEN TO HER, BUT SOME DISAPPOINTMENT THAT THE TALKS DID NOT PRODUCE MORE PROGRESS ON DETENTE AND DISARMAMENT.

DETAIL

2. ALL ITALIAN NEWSPAPERS, AND TV NEWS BULLETINS, CARRIED FULL REPORTS DAILY FROM MOSCOW OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT. THE PRIME MINISTER'S SPEECH AND PRESS CONFERENCE AND COMMENTS BY OFFICIAL SPOKESMEN FROM THE KREMLIN AND THE BRITISH PARTY WERE REPORTED FULLY AND ACCURATELY. BUT PREOCCUPATION WITH INTERNAL ITALIAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS PUSHED THE STORY ONTO THE INSIDE PAGES AND LEFT LITTLE ROOM FOR EDITORIAL COMMENT.

3. REPORTS OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S TALKS WITH GORBACHEV ON 30 MARCH WERE PRESENTED IN OVER DRAMATIC TERMS. THE FRANK EXCHANGES WERE DESCRIBED IN MOST ITALIAN NEWSPAPERS AS TENSE AND ANIMATED, LEADING TO A HOSTILE ATMOSPHERE. THE ATMOSPHERE ON 31 MARCH HOWEVER WAS DESCRIBED AS WARMER. GREAT INTEREST WAS SHOWN IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH SACHAROV AND HER TV INTERVIEW AS EXAMPLES OF THE PROGRESS TOWARDS OPENESS MADE UNDER GORBACHEV. MOST PAPERS EXPRESSED RESPECT FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S PERFORMANCE IN HER TELEVISION INTERVIEW.

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4. IN ROUND-UP ARTICLES ON 2 APRIL LA STAMPA PAID TRIBUTE TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S CLARITY OF EXPRESSION AND HER MASTERY OF THE SUBJECTS UNDER DISCUSSION. IT ALSO DESCRIBED THE RECEPTION GIVEN TO HER AS EXCEPTIONAL, A REFLECTION ON THE FACT THAT SHE IS CURRENTLY SEEN AS AN UNDOUBTED "LEADER" WITHIN THE WESTERN WORLD. IL TEMPO COMMENTED THAT WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER'S PERFORMANCE WILL HAVE DISAPPOINTED THOSE WHO HOPED FOR RECONCILIATION AND CONCRETE PROGRESS IN EAST/WEST RELATIONS IT WILL HAVE DONE HER NO HARM IN THE EYES OF BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION.

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