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TEXT

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SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MENEM OF ARGENTINA VISITS EC
- HEADQUARTERS

REF: (A) BRUSSELS 02097; (B) BRUSSELS 01694

1. SUMMARY. ARGENTINA'S PRESIDENT CARLOS MENEM CALLED
ON THE EC COMMISSION ON FEBRUARY 14 AS PART OF HIS

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
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EUROPEAN TOUR WHICH HAD STARTED ON FEBRUARY 12 WITH A SPEECH TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN STRASBOURG (REF.A). FOLLOWING TALKS WITH PRESIDENT DELORS AND COMMISSIONER MATUTES, WHO HOLDS RESPONSIBILITY FOR RELATIONS WITH LATIN AMERICA, MENEM GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE CONFIRMED HIS READINESS TO PROVIDE A HOME FOR POTENTIAL MIGRANTS FROM EASTERN EUROPE. THE COMMISSION WAS PREPARED TO STUDY THE "MODALITIES AND IMPLICATIONS" OF THE PROJECT, PROVIDED THAT THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED ARE INTERESTED. PRESIDENT DELORS WILL VISIT ARGENTINA IN JUNE TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT UNCLASSIFIED

THAT WILL LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE EC AND MERCOSUR (SOUTH AMERICAN COMMON MARKET). END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT MENEM OF ARGENTINA WAS APPARENTLY SATISFIED WITH HIS VISIT TO THE EC INSTITUTIONS IN STRASBOURG AND BRUSSELS ON FEBRUARY 12 AND 14. SPEAKING AT A PRESS CONFERENCE HE SAID THE RESULTS HAD BEEN "EXCELLENT." (SEE PRESS RELEASE UNDER PARA 8). TAKING QUESTIONS, MENEM CONFIRMED ARGENTINA'S READINESS TO OPEN UP NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIGRANTS FROM THE COUNTRIES OF EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE, ALTHOUGH HE WOULD NOT PUT ANY SPECIFIC FIGURES ON THE PROPOSAL. READING FROM THE PRESS RELEASE, MENEM FURTHER SAID THAT PRESIDENT DELORS HAD NOTED HIS POSITION WITH INTEREST AND EXPRESSED THE COMMISSION'S READINESS TO PARTICIPATE, IN CASE THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED WERE INTERESTED, IN A STUDY ON THE MODALITIES AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT.

3. MENEM SAID ARGENTINA DID NOT WANT TO REPEAT THE MISTAKES OF THE EARLY SIXTIES WITH THE INFUX OF MIGRANTS FROM ALGERIA. ARGENTINA WILL THEREFORE NEED "PROPER COUNSELLING" (WHICH IMPLIES EC ASSISTANCE). MENEM SAID ARGENTINA WOULD BE PREPARED TO ELABORATE WHEN PRESIDENT DELORS VISITS ARGENTINA IN THE FIRST WEEK OF JUNE.

4. COMMISSIONER MATUTES PRAISED THE ARGENTINE INITIATIVE, WHICH HE TERMED "IMAGINATIVE" AND "POSITIVE FROM ALL POINTS OF VIEW" SINCE THE PLAN COULD "ENRICH THE HUMAN CAPITAL OF ARGENTINA." HE NOTED THAT THE INITIATIVE "SEEMS TO HAVE THE BACKING OF OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES" AND EXPRESSED THE COMMISSION'S READINESS "TO EMBARK ON A STUDY." HE SAID BOTH ARGENTINA AND THE COMMISSION FELT THE INITIATIVE WOULD BE VIABLE AS LONG AS IT IS SUPPORTED BY THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE THEMSELVES.

5. MENEM COMMENTED ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO OPEN UP THE ECONOMY, WHICH REQUIRE "POLITICAL DECISIVENESS, INTELLIGENCE AND A LOT OF COURAGE." HE SAID THE ACHIEVEMENTS IN THAT FIELD WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF THE ARGENTINE PARLIAMENT.

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6. MENEM ALSO SAID THAT THE RELEASE OF THE ARCHIVES OF NAZI CRIMINALS, WHO HAD TAKEN REFUGE IN ARGENTINA AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR, WAS A "SOVEREIGN DECISION OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

PRESIDENT OF ARGENTINA."

7. ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE FALKLANDS, MENEM SAID THEY BELONGED TO THE REPUBLIC OF ARGENTINA. "WE HAVE RESUMED GOOD AND EXCELLENT RELATIONS WITH THE UK. WE FEEL THAT THE MALVINAS ARE OURS."

8. TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE FOLLOWS:

(INFORMAL MISSION TRANSLATION FROM FRENCH)

BEGIN TEXT

VISIT BY PRESIDENT MENEM TO THE COMMISSION

PRESIDENT DELORS AND COMMISSIONER MATUTES HELD TALKS WITH PRESIDENT MENEM OF ARGENTINA, WHO VISITED THE COMMISSION ON FEBRUARY 14, 1992. THIS WAS THE FIRST VISIT BY AN ARGENTINE HEAD OF STATE FOLLOWING THIS COUNTRY'S RETURN TO DEMOCRACY.

PRESIDENT MENEM WAS ACCOMPANIED AMONG OTHERS BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DI TELLA, MINISTER OF INTERIOR MANZANO AND MINISTER OF THE ECONOMY CAVALLO.

WORKING MEETINGS BETWEEN VICE-PRESIDENT ANDRIESSEN, COMMISSIONER MATUTES AND MINISTER DI TELLA FOCUSED ON EC/ARGENTINA RELATIONS, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COOPERATION AS WELL AS DEVELOPMENTS IN THE URUGUAY ROUND NEGOTIATIONS AND BILATERAL RELATIONS WITHIN THE GATT FRAMEWORK.

THE TWO PRESIDENTS NOTED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND ARGENTINA HAD GONE BACK TO NORMAL AND WELCOMED THE EXCELLENT STATE OF THESE RELATIONS AS CONFIRMED BY THE EXTENSION OF THESE RELATIONS TO NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION. WITH THIS RESPECT, THEY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPLEMENTING THE PROVISIONS OF THE ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT SIGNED IN APRIL 1990 AS WELL AS THE RECENT OPENING OF A COMMISSION DELEGATION OFFICE IN ARGENTINA.

MESSRS DELORS AND MENEM EXCHANGED VIEWS ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS, IN PARTICULAR WITH RESPECT TO THE LATEST EVENTS IN EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA AND NOTED WITH SATISFACTION THE FAVORABLE TRENDS WHICH APPEARED IN BOTH REGIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR.
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PRESIDENT MENEM PRESENTED THE GUIDELINES OF HIS GOVERNMENT'S POLICY FOR AN IN-DEPTH RESTRUCTURING OF THE ARGENTINE ECONOMY. PRESIDENT DELORS WARMLY WELCOMED THE

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SUBSTANTIAL RESULTS ACHIEVED AND CONFIRMED THE COMMUNITY'S INTENTION TO SUPPORT THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STABILIZATION OF ARGENTINA.

DURING THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS, BOTH PARTIES REVIEWED A CERTAIN NUMBER OF POINTS IN INTERNATIONAL AND BILATERAL RELATIONS CONCERNING THE COMMUNITY AND ARGENTINA.

IN PARTICULAR, THEY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF A RAPID CONCLUSION OF THE URUGUAY ROUND NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH WOULD TAKE MUTUAL INTERESTS INTO ACCOUNT WITHIN A GLOBAL AND BALANCED FRAMEWORK.

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGIONAL INTEGRATION PROCESSES OF THE TWO REGIONS WERE ALSO DISCUSSED, BOTH WITH RESPECT TO THE MAJOR PROGRESS ACHIEVED AT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL IN MAASTRICHT AND THE REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF MERCOSUR, FOR WHICH THE COMMUNITY'S SUPPORT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED. IT WAS NOTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL START IN THE NEAR FUTURE FOR THE CONCLUSION AND AN INTERINSTITUTIONAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND MERCOSUR (NOTE: WE UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT WOULD BE SIGNED ON THE OCCASION OF DELORS' VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES IN JUNE. END COMMENT).

WITH RESPECT TO DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION AND THE COUNTRIES OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE, PRESIDENT MENEM EXPRESSED HIS INTENTION OF SUPPORTING, IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS POSSIBILITIES, THE PROCESS OF ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING AND OPENING, AND REFERRED TO HIS READINESS TO OPEN UP NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIGRANTS IN ARGENTINA FOR THE CITIZENS OF THOSE COUNTRIES. PRESIDENT DELORS TOOK NOTE OF THAT POSITION WITH INTEREST AND EXPRESSED THE COMMISSION'S READINESS TO PARTICIPATE, IN CASE THE COUNTRIES CONCERNED WERE INTERESTED, IN A STUDY ON THE MODALITIES AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT.

BOTH SIDES NOTED THE SATISFACTORY DEVELOPMENTS IN THEIR COOPERATION. PRESIDENT DELORS AND MR MATUTES SAID THEY WOULD PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT ALL MEANS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMUNITY SHOULD BE USED IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION WITH ARGENTINA AS FROM THE UNCLASSIFIED

FIRST YEAR OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE (FRAMEWORK COOPERATION) AGREEMENT.

IN THIS CONTEXT, BOTH SIDES WERE PLEASED TO NOTE THE SIGNING IN STRASBOURG BY (EC AGRICULTURE) COMMISSIONER MAC SHARRY AND AGRICULTURE MINISTER REGUNAGA OF A COOPERATION AGREEMENT IN PHYTOSANITAY, VETERINARY AND FOOD HEALTH AREAS.

MESSRS MATUTES AND DI TELLA ALSO SIGNED AN AGREEMENT FOR A THREE-YEAR COOPERATION PROGRAM ON THE RATIONAL USE OF

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ENERGY. A FINANCING CONVENTION WAS ALSO SIGNED FOR A PROJECT DESIGNED TO PROMOTE THE EXPORT OF NON-TRADITIONAL PRODUCTS ORIGINATING FROM ARGENTINA.

THE TWO PRESIDENTS UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE ATTACHED BY THE COMMUNITY AND ARGENTINA TO THE CONCLUSION OF A FISHERIES AGREEMENT. THEY NOTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR THIS AGREEMENT WILL TAKE PLACE AS FROM MARCH 31 NEXT AND EXPRESSED HOPE FOR A RAPID CONCLUSION.

PRESIDENT MENEM WAS PLEASED TO HEAR THAT PRESIDENT DELORS INTENDED TO ACCEPT AN INVITATION TO PAY AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO ARGENTINA, WHICH CURRENTLY HOLDS THE PRESIDENCY OF MERCOSUR.

END TEXT
DOBBINS

ADMIN
END OF MESSAGE

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