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FORM DS 322 (OCR)

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DEF 15 IND-US
X DEF 15 IND-UK
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IMMEDIATE

LONDON

ROUTINE ADDIS ABABA, PORT LOUIS, NAIROBI, DAR ES SALAAM,
MOGADISCIO, TANANARIVE, PRETORIA, LOURENCO MARQUES, TOKYO, JAKARTA

SUBJECT: DIEGO GARCIA AGREEMENT: CONTINGENCY PRESS
STATEMENT

REF: LONDON 9548

DEF 15 IND-US
X DEF 15 IND-UK

1. EMBASSY MAY, AT ITS DISCRETION, WISH TO SUGGEST TO HMG
FOLLOWING JOINT STATEMENT TO BE USED IN EVENT DIEGO GARCIA
AGREEMENT ATTRACTS PUBLIC ATTENTION PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.
QUOTE THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE GOVERN-
MENT OF GREAT BRITAIN CONCLUDED ON OCTOBER 24 IN LONDON A
SUPPLEMENTAL ADMINISTRATIVE AGREEMENT REGULATING THE STATUS
OF THE JOINT US/UK LIMITED COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY ON THE
ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE AGREEMENT
WAS CONCLUDED PURSUANT TO THE 1966 US/UK BRITISH INDIAN
OCEAN TERRITORY AGREEMENT WHICH PROVIDES THAT FACILITIES
SUCH AS THIS ONE MAY BE CONSTRUCTED ON ISLANDS IN THE BIOT
UNDER A MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENT.
END QUOTE.

2. IN ADDITION WE PROPOSE THAT THE FOLLOWING BACKGROUND
INFORMATION BE UTILIZED IN REPLYING TO INQUIRIES.
QUOTE IN 1965, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT CREATED THE BRITISH
INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORY (BIOT) AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE ENTITY
BY COMBINING ISLANDS IN THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO WITH THE
ISLANDS OF ALDABRA, FARQUHAR, AND DESROCHES. ON

JDS

JEK

PB

GROSS

MOGGE

HURD

WARREN

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DECEMBER 30, 1966, THE US AND UK SIGNED AN AGREEMENT MAKING THE ISLANDS COMPRISING THE BIOT AVAILABLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS FOR DEFENSE.

AFTER THE BIOT AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED IN 1966 THE US AND UK GOVERNMENTS KEPT UNDER NEARLY CONTINUOUS REVIEW VARIOUS PLANS FOR MEETING DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE US-UK AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE REGARDING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE FACILITY WAS PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED ON DECEMBER 15, 1970.

THE DECISION TO CONSTRUCT THE DIEGO GARCIA COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY WAS MADE IN ORDER TO FILL A LONGSTANDING NEED TO CLOSE A GAP IN THE UNITED STATES NAVY'S WORLDWIDE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AND TO PROVIDE FOR COMMUNICATIONS LINKS TO US NAVY, ROYAL NAVY, AND MERCHANT SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT TRANSITING THE INDIAN OCEAN. CONSTRUCTION WORK ON THE FACILITY, WHICH WILL COST APPROXIMATELY 20 MILLION DOLS, BEGAN IN MARCH OF 1971 AND IS SCHEDULED TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE JULY 1974. THERE ARE CURRENTLY APPROXIMATELY 1,000 SEABEES ON DIEGO GARCIA ENGAGED IN CONSTRUCTION WORK.

THE DIEGO GARCIA AGREEMENT DOES NOT IMPLY ANY EXTENSION OF A US DEFENSE COMMITMENT TO THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE FACILITY IS IN NO WAY INTENDED TO BE INIMICAL TO ANY OTHER NATION'S INTEREST, NOR IS IT BEING CONSTRUCTED IN RESPONSE TO US OR BRITISH SECURITY AGREEMENTS WITH ANY OTHER COUNTRY. IT IS, IN FACT, DESIGNED TO MEET AN IMPORTANT WORLDWIDE EXISTING NEED IN NAVAL AND AVIATION COMMUNICATIONS. MOREOVER, THE METEOROLOGICAL DATA GATHERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE US/UK OPERATION OF THE FACILITY WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION THEREBY CONTRIBUTING TO IMPROVED WEATHER FORECASTING, AVIATION FLIGHT SAFETY, SAFE PASSAGE OF SHIPPING, ETC.

THE US AND UK COMMUNICATIONS TECHNICIANS AND THE ENTIRE SUPPORTING STAFF ASSIGNED TO THE FACILITY WILL PROBABLY TOTAL ABOUT 290 PEOPLE. THE FACILITY WILL HAVE AN ASSOCIATED AIRSTRIP, TURNING BASIN AND LIMITED FUEL STORAGE FOR FACILITY OPERATIONS. THESE CAPABILITIES ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO PROVIDING FOR REPLENISHMENT OF SUPPLIES, CHANGEOVER OF PERSONNEL, AND SIMILAR ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE OPERATION OF THE FACILITY. END QUOTE.

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| 3

3. ANY QUERIES REGARDING THE RELOCATION OF THE ILOIS
OR CONCERNING COMPENSATION TO THEM WILL BE REFERRED TO
THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FOR A REPLY. ΨΨ

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ADDITIONAL INFO ADDRESSEES:

SINGAPORE, KUALA LUMPUR, CANBERRA, WELLINGTON, BANGKOK, COLOMBO,
NEW DELHI, ISLAMABAD, TEHRAN, BAHRAIN, USUN, COMIDEASTFOR,
CINCLANT FOR POLAND, CINCPAC FOR POLAD

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ADDITIONAL CLEARANCES:

H - MR. SCHNEE (SUBS)
EA/P - MR. ROSEN
PM/PA - COL. ALLISON

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