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SIC I9M
IRAQ/KUWAIT: US DEPLOYMENTS

SUMMARY

1. THE PRESIDENT ANNOUNCES INCREASE IN US FORCES COMMITTED TO THE GULF. THE STATED PURPOSE IS TO ENSURE COALITION HAS ADEQUATE OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPTION. CHENEY GIVES DETAILS OF NEW GROUND FORCES AND NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS, WHICH APPEAR TO AMOUNT TO AN ADDITIONAL 150,000 PERSONNEL.

DETAIL

2. PRESIDENT BUSH ANNOUNCED AT A PRESS CONFERENCE TODAY (8 NOVEMBER) THAT, FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH KING FAHD AND OTHER ALLIES, HE HAD DECIDED TO INCREASE US FORCES COMMITTED TO DESERT SHIELD QUOTE TO ENSURE THAT THE COALITION HAS AN ADEQUATE OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPTION SHOULD THAT BE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE OUR COMMON GOALS UNQUOTE. HE ADDED THAT, TO THIS END, THE US WOULD CONTINUE TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBILITY OF BOTH ADDITIONAL ALLIED FORCE CONTRIBUTIONS AND APPROPRIATE UN ACTIONS.
3. ASKED IF THE NEW DEPLOYMENTS MEANT THAT THE US WAS GOING TO WAR, THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS DOING WHAT HE FELT WAS NECESSARY TO FULFILL US OBJECTIVES, ADDING THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. IF THIS MOVEMENT OF FORCE CONVINCED SADDAM HUSSEIN TO WITHDRAW, SO MUCH THE BETTER.
4. DEFENCE SECRETARY CHENEY GAVE DETAILS OF THE NEW DEPLOYMENTS. IN SUMMARY, HE ANNOUNCED THE DEPLOYMENT OF A FURTHER FOUR-AND-A-THIRD DIVISIONS (MAKING A TOTAL OF EIGHT-AND-TWO-THIRDS DIVISIONS), 3 CARRIER BATTLE GROUPS (MAKING A TOTAL OF 6), AND ONE BATTLESHIP CARRIER BATTLE GROUPS (MAKING A TOTAL OF 2). HE SAID THAT HE WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO ANNOUNCE DETAILS OF FURTHER AIRFORCE DEPLOYMENTS, BUT IMPLIED THAT THEY WERE LIKELY TO FOLLOW. IN ADDITION TO THE GROUND FORCE DEPLOYMENTS (ALL REGULAR TROOPS), CHENEY ANNOUNCED THE CALL UP OF COMBAT UNITS (3 BRIGADES) OF THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD TO BE PUT

THROUGH OPERATIONAL-READINESS TRAINING - WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF SUBSEQUENT DEPLOYMENT TO THE GULF. (FULL DETAILS IN BDS SIGNAL SIC ACA/I9M OF 082300Z, COPIED TO FCO EMERGENCY UNIT).

5. CHENEY NOTED THAT THE MISSION OF US FORCES REMAINED TO DETER FURTHER AGGRESSION BY SADDAM HUSSEIN, TO DEFEND, SHOULD DETERRENCE FAIL AND TO ENFORCE SANCTIONS. QUOTE BUT THE ADDITIONAL MILITARY CAPABILITY THAT'S NOW BEING ADDED CLEARLY WILL GIVE US THE ABILITY TO CONDUCT OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS SHOULD THAT BE REQUIRED IN THE MONTHS AHEAD UNQUOTE.

6. CHENEY REFUSED TO PUT A FIGURE ON THE ADDITIONAL DEPLOYMENTS, BUT INITIAL ESTIMATES ARE OF A TOTAL INCREASE OF 150,000 OR MORE. SIMILARLY, HE WOULD NOT GIVE A DATE FOR DEPLOYMENT, BUT AGREED THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE NEW YEAR.

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