March 22 Mars 1991


REUTER - WORLD NEWS SUMMARY

UNITED NATIONS - The United States has distributed to U.N. Security Council members a draft resolution calling for the elimination of Iraq’s war machine. The document requires Iraq to accept the destruction and removal of its ballistic missile systems and all ‘weapons of mass destruction’, including chemical, biological and nuclear.

MOSCOW - Allies of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev are hailing the outcome of this week’s referendum on preserving the country as a victory for the Kremlin leader’s policies. But it failed to impress leaders of nationalist-minded republics or curb strike action by angry coal miners.

WASHINGTON - Deputy US Trade Representative Julius Katz said European Community moves to reform its farm support policy had paved the way for a global trade liberalisation pact, and he hoped one could be reached by the end of the year.

THE SITUATION IN IRAQ

THE INDEPENDENT: UN report describes catastrophe

NEW YORK - "The first comprehensive picture to emerge of the devastation of Iraq caused by the allied bombing campaign has been given in a hard-hitting confidential United Nations report circulating among members of the Security Council. The report does not touch on the rebellion in the country, but warns that with the Iraqi summer temperatures of 50°C only weeks away, there is very little time left to avert a major human tragedy in Iraq. ‘It is unmistakable that the Iraqi people may soon face a further imminent catastrophe, which could include epidemic and famine, if massive life-supporting needs are not rapidly met’.”

FINANCIAL TIMES: Iraqi forces ‘crushing rebellion in south’

LONDON - "Iraqi forces are crushing rebellion in the south of the country with the widespread slaughter of civilians in rebel-held areas and the use of ‘concentration camps’ to deter unrest, exiled opposition groups claimed yesterday. However, Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq, who claim already to have taken complete control of the important oil town of Kirkuk, said they had surrounded the million-strong town of Mosul, Iraq’s third city, in preparation for a major assault on Iraqi forces."

OECD IN THE NEWS

JAPAN TIMES: High-level OECD talks to consider trade, Gulf

"Officials of the OECD will arrive in Japan to discuss topics as wide-ranging as the Uruguay Round and postwar reconstruction in the Persian Gulf. OECD Secretary-General Jean-Claude Paye is expected in Tokyo April 21 to 24 for talks with Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu, Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama, Finance Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto and Eiichi Nakao, minister of international trade and industry, government sources said. Economic assistance to the Soviet Union and other East European countries will be a major topic when Salvatore Zecchini, OECD assistant secretary general, arrives March 26, they forecast... Gerhard Abel, OECD director for trade, will visit April 1 to discuss the planned 1992 market integration in the European Community."

LA TRIBUNE: Turquie: l’OCDE prévoit une année 1991 difficile

"La Turquie va payer chèrement cette année les retombées de la crise du Golfe. Le produit national brut turc devrait s’accroître de 3,5% en 1991, soit moitié moins que les 7,5% de croissance attendus pour 1990, prévoit l’OCDE dans son étude annuelle consacrée à l’économie turque. ‘La persis-
tance de déséquilibres macroéconomiques comme l’essor des déficits publics, l’inflation élevée et les résultats déclinsants de la balance des paiements conjugués aux effets négatifs de la crise du Golfe mettent les orientations économiques actuelles de la Turquie à rude épreuve’, observent les experts de l’OCDE. A lui seul, le renchérissement de la facture énergétique devrait coûter 2 points de PNB. A quoi l’OCDE ajoute les séquelles de l’embargo sur les exportations turques. La perte des marchés koweïtiens et irakiens représente une amputation de 5% des recettes d’exportation turques."

EC - ENERGY

FINANCIAL TIMES: Reform for EC power links

BRUSSELS - "Companies throughout Europe could buy cheaper electricity and gas from foreign suppliers as a result of a decision to dismantle national energy monopolies, announced yesterday by the EC Commission. The Commission yesterday started legal proceedings which it sees as a first step to enable industrial users to buy electricity and gas from any supplier within the EC. This practice, known as 'third party access', would allow any supplier in the EC to distribute energy through any gas pipeline or over any electricity grid in Europe. The legal action by the commission targets electricity monopolies in Britain, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. The gas trading monopolies under EC attack are in Belgium, Denmark and France."

AIR TRANSPORT

TIMES: British Airways offers free flights

LONDON - "... April 23 is the day British Airways has chosen to 'kick start' the depressed aviation industry by giving away every seat on its vast international network. The free offer, which includes Concorde, first, business and economy class travel on every route except domestic services, is part of a 50 million pounds sterling campaign aimed at persuading the world to take to the air again after a dramatic decline in passengers as a result of the Gulf war."

LE FIGARO: British Aerospace supprime 4 700 emplois

LONDRES - "La direction de British Aerospace a annoncé, hier, la suppression de 4 700 emplois. BAe, qui avait déjà décidé de supprimer 5 000 emplois en décembre dernier, avec la fermeture de ses ateliers de Preston, Lancs et Kingston-Upon-Thames, paie ainsi le prix de la récession de l'économie britannique et la réduction des budgets militaires un peu partout dans le monde."

ARGENTINA

FINANCIAL TIMES: Argentine deficit block welcomed

BUENOS AIRES - "Financial markets reacted cautiously but positively to the Argentine government’s decision to send a law to Congress, under which the central bank will be prohibited from printing money to cover the government’s spending deficit. In announcing that the austral would be freely convertible, as of April 1, Mr Domingo Cavallo, economy minister, said: 'The currency will have 100% backing in gold and currency reserves, so it cannot be devalued. We will operate an open trade policy with the rest of the world."

OECD ECONOMIES

United Kingdom

FINANCIAL TIMES: UK to reform local government

LONDON - "The British government yesterday mapped out its escape route from the political quicksand of the poll tax by announcing a single household tax alongside the prospect of sweeping reforms to local government. The new 'local tax', based on property values linked to the number of residents in each home, is planned to come into force by the 1993-1994 tax year... In a parallel move, measures were announced to move control of further education for post-16 year olds from local authorities to a new council responsible directly to central government."

France
LES ECHOS: Les investissements à l’étranger pulvérisent les records

"Les entreprises françaises poursuivent sans faiblir leur effort d’internationalisation. Pour la 4ème année consécutive, elles viennent de battre leur propre record en termes d’investissements directs à l’étran-ger. Selon les 1ères estimations, les montants consacrés à des rachats ou créations hors des frontières par les entreprises tricolores ont atteint 143,5 mrd de francs en 1990, soit une progression de 24,5% par rapport aux 115,2 mrd de francs enregistrés en 1989. Depuis 1985, le montant des investissements tricolores à l’étranger a ainsi été multiplié par sept."

END-OF-TEXT