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REUTER - WORLD NEWS SUMMARY

SARAJEVO/UNITED NATIONS - UN relief officials prepare to close down operations in Sarajevo but could be ordered to stay if UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali succeeds in persuading UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ogata to rescind her order.

A UN convoy carrying emergency relief is expected to reach starving Moslems in the beleaguered eastern Bosnian town of Gorazde on Friday after being held up by Serbian militiamen for 2 days.

WASHINGTON - President Clinton continues drive to rally the American people behind his ambitious economic programme to increase pressure on Congress to back his proposals for sharp tax increases and spending cuts. Clinton attends an economic discussion in Chillicothe, Ohio, addresses rally at Hyde Park, New York.

JOHANNESBURG - South Africa’s National Party government and the Inkatha Freedom Party, the main black rival of the African National Congress, finish 3 days of talks and are expected to issue statements following the ANC’s proposals for a transition to full democracy in South Africa.

The ANC proposed all-race elections within a year and a maximum 5 year period of transitional rule in which black and white would govern together.

CAIRO - US Secretary of State Christopher meets President Mubarak before leaving for Amman on the next stage of Middle East tour aimed at getting stalled Arab-Israeli peace talks moving again.

PHNOM PENH - UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali visits UN peacekeeping force ever in Cambodia, where fighting has increased ahead of elections.

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OECD-MEMBER COUNTRIES

United States

REUTER: Tyson does not expect more revenues seeking

BERKELEY - "The Clinton administration does not anticipate having to ask for more revenues to meet its deficit-cutting goals, Laura Tyson, Chairwoman of the Council of Economic Advisers, said on Thursday. Asked at a press conference whether the Clinton administration might need further tax increases in addition to a package announced on Wednesday night to reduce the federal deficit, Tyson said: 'We believe we’ve set down a package which gives us a big amount of deficit reduction... She said the figure of $495bn used by Clinton was a gross deficit reduction number including spending cuts and revenue increases. Another lower figure of $325bn which had been used was a net figure adjusted for tax incentives and spending programmes which the Clinton administration will also undertake, Tyson said."

LES ECHOS: Déficit commercial américain: + 28,9% en 1992

"Le déficit commercial américain s’est fortement détérioré sur l’ensemble de 1992, enregistrant son plus mauvais résultat depuis 1990 pour s’inscrire à 84,3 mrds de dollars, a indiqué hier le département du Commerce. Son augmentation a atteint 28,89% par rapport aux 65,4 mrds enregistrés en 1991. Une détérioration enregistrée en dépit de l’amélioration de décembre. En baisse de 5,3% sur le mois précédent, le solde négatif de la balance commerciale n’a représenté que 6,95 mrds de dollars, alors que les exportations ont revêtu leur plus forte performance au cours de l’année 1992. Le déficit de 8 mrds de dollars. Le département du Commerce a également révisé à la baisse ses chiffres de novembre, de 7,59 mrds de dollars à 7,34 mrds. Les importations ont augmenté de 2,5% pour
représenter 46,7 mrds de dollars en décembre, alors que les exportations se sont accrues de 4% à 39,7 mrds."

Germany

FINANCIAL TIMES: German engineering employers revoke eastern pay deal

BERLIN - "Germany’s engineering employers are abandoning an agreement to bring east German wages up to the level of their west German counterparts by 1994. The decision is likely to provoke a major confrontation between IG Metall, Germany’s giant engineering union, and Gesamtmetall, the employers’ federation. It could lead to a wave of strikes among IG Metall’s 300,000 workers in eastern Germany. More than 10,000 workers in Chemnitz, Saxony demonstrated on Wednesday against any attempt to revoke the contract."

United Kingdom

FINANCIAL TIMES: UK unemployment hits 3m for 1st time in 6 years

LONDON - "The prospect of UK tax increases in next month’s budget appeared to harden yesterday after an hour-long cabinet discussion of the economic outlook was accompanied by news that headline unemployment last month pushed above 3m for the first time in 6 years. With little hope in the UK government of any falls in unemployment until the mid-1990s, Mr. Norman Lamont, the chancellor, left ministerial colleagues in no doubt that tax increases to cut the government’s deficit were a real possibility in the March 16 Budget... The headline figure of people unemployed and claiming benefit in January rose to 3.06m, while on a seasonally adjusted basis the figure was lower at 2.99m."

NON-MEMBER COUNTRIES

FINANCIAL TIMES: Russia ‘trying to paralyse Ukraine’

KIEV/MOSCOW - "Russia was trying to bring about ‘a full paralysis’ of the Ukrainian economy, Mr Leonid Kuchma, Ukraine’s prime minister, said yesterday. Such action could present the west with a ‘distorted’ view of the republic’s economic position, he said... The weapons in the struggle are oil and gas, for which Russia is demanding world prices or threatening to decrease supply, and the unresolved issue of the foreign debts and assets of the former Soviet Union... ‘I cannot understand the Russian position’, Mr Kuchma said. ‘It is not motivated by economics. It can only be seen as some sort of pressure on Ukraine. But Russia must realise that to return to the former Soviet Union is neither technically nor politically possible’... Mr Shokhin’s statements came on top of Russia’s unilateral increase in the prices it charges Ukraine for natural gas to world levels - a jump of 2,500% - and the announcement by the Russian prime minister that Ukraine would receive only 15m tonnes of oil this year, 5m less than Russia promised in January and one third of Ukraine’s energy requirement."

FINANCIAL TIMES: Economists busy in wintery Tajikistan

"Having quieted its civil war, the ex-Soviet Tajikistan government has embarked on an ambitious economic programme, including oil, gold and cotton projects. But success is far from assured, hinging on whether Islamic-dominated opposition forces, now trapped behind deep winter snows, will regroup in spring. In a promising region with largely untapped natural gas and oil reserves, the ramifications of new fighting go far – Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Tajikistan’s neighbours are more worried than ever that instability will spill over their borders. The chief source of their anxiety is the presence of thousands of Tajik fighters in rebel training camps in Afghanistan, who are expected to try to return home in spring. Already, hundreds of fighters and thousands of arms have come over the border. Against this backdrop, Tajikistan leader Imomali Rakhmanov is leading a Commonwealth of Independent States' effort to hold the line against upheaval in otherwise quiet, conservative Central Asia. But he is not doing it alone. His Commonwealth allies are providing prodigious military assistance. ‘If we manage to seal the border and stop the weapons coming from Afghanistan for 1 or 2 months’, Mr Rakhmanov said in an interview, ‘we’ll be able to manage our other problems’.

AFP: Economie chinoise stable malgré la surchauffe, selon le gvt

PEKIN - "Les premiers signes d’une surchauffe de l’économie chinoise ont fait leur apparition à l’issue d’une année record, mais actuellement la
situation est toujours ‘pratiquement normale’, a déclaré jeudi l’Office national des Statistiques. Le produit intérieur brut (PIB) chinois a progressé de 12,8% à 2 390 mds de yuan (410 mds USD) en 1992, un record absolu, alors que le revenu par habitant a dépassé pour la 1ère fois 2 000 yuan ($350), a déclaré le porte-parole du bureau Zhan Zhongji, en présentant le bilan annuel de cet organisme. La production industrielle a connu sa plus forte progression depuis le début de la libéralisation de la Chine en 1978, augmentant de 20,8% à 1 010 mds de yuan (175 mds USD). Les investissements étrangers directs en Chine ont totalisé 11,16 mds USD en 1992, dépassant pour la 1ère fois les emprunts chinois à l’étranger, a déclaré M. Zhang."