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TELEGRAM

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 AID-28 IO-13 UCF-05 IGA-02 AGR-20 SR-01 ORM-03
E-15 HEW-08 EUR-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07
L-04 NSAE-00 NSC-10 P-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-20 PC-04
SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 TRSY-11 XMB-06 COM-08 RSR-01

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2589

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SUBJ: WEEKLY RELIEF ROUNDUP

1. OVERALL SITUATION CONTINUES TO IMPROVE WITH LOCAL MARKET INCREASINGLY PROVIDING FOODSTUFFS IN SOME AREAS. CONDITIONS VARY, OF COURSE, AND PLACES REMAIN WHERE CONTINUATION RELIEF PROGRAM ESSENTIAL TO PREVENT RELAPSE TO SITUATION OF CRITICAL NEED. SEE, FOR EXAMPLE, CONDITIONS REPORTED IN AREA BETWEEN IKOT-EKPENE AND ITU (LAGOS 3020). NRC PROGRESS REPORT (LAGOS 2992) FOUND ABAKALIKI AND NSUKKA AREAS TO HAVE LITTLE FUTURE REQUIREMENTS WHILE OWERRI AREA WILL NEED FOOD RELIEF UNTIL AUTUMN HARVEST. AT SAME TIME, AID OFFICIAL FOUND DRAMATIC DECLINE IN SEVERE MALNUTRITION IN OWERRI AREA, EVIDENCED BY REDUCTION OF SICK BAYS AND INPATIENTS. SIMILAR SITUATION FOUND IN AREA BUSH CLINICS. ADDITION OF TRUCK TONNAGE VIA PORT HARCOURT PLUS LARGE ARRIVAL OF BEANS FROM NORTH YIELDED FIRST-TIME RESERVE OF SOME ITEMS FOR OWERRI. EUROPEAN RELIEF WORKER WHO REMAINED IN ENCLAVE DURING WAR SAID MORE FOOD NOW REACHING MORE PEOPLE WITH LESS FAVORITISM, PILFERAGE AND CORRUPTION THAN DURING WAR. FORMER REGISTRAR ON STAFF IBADAN UNIVERSITY TEACHING HOSPITAL WHO HEADS MEDICAL TEAM IN OWERRI AREA SAID NUTRITIONAL SITUATION NOW NO WORSE THAN IN WESTERN STATE. IN THIS CONNECTION, INTERESTING THAT NIGERAIN

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TELEVISION THIS WEEK RAN FIFTEEN MINUTE PROGRAM ON RELIEF EFFORT AND CONDITION OF PEOPLE IN WAR-AFFECTED AREA. FOOTAGE, WHICH INCLUDED SOME DEPRESSING SIGHTS TO UNINITIATED WESTERN OBSERVER, PRESUMABLY ACCEPTABLE AS NORMAL TO NIGERIANS. INCIDENTALLY, PROGRAM PICTORIALY DISPLAYED MOSTLY BRITISH RELIEF CONTRIBUTION AND SPECIFICALLY "EXPOSED" ALLEGED MISREPRESENTATIONS BY TIME MAGAZINE ABOUT CONDITIONS IN AREA.

2. RESTOCKING OF FOOD IMPORTS DESTINED FOR ENUGU AND THOS IN TRANSIT REPORTED LAGOS 2925. LAGOS 3020 AND 3041 REPORT INCREASED MOVEMENT LOCAL FOODSTUFFS INTO SOME AREAS OF E-C STATE MARKET--PARTICULARLY NORTH. SITUATION MAY IMPROVE EVEN MORE WITH OPEING OF ASABA-ONITSHA BRIDGE TODAY. LAGOS 2931 GIVE AMOUNTS, WHERE PURCHASED AND DISTRIBUTION ARRANGEMENT OF AID SEED PROGRAM; LAGOS 2926 PARA. 6 REPORTS OBSERVATIONS OF SEED DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM.

3. LAGOS 2969 REPORTS WAR DAMAGES TO HOSPITALS. NRC REPORT (LAGOS 2992) FOUND E-C STATE MINHEALTH PUTTING MORE HOSPITALS INTO OPERATION STAFFED BY INCREASING NUMBER OF IBO PROFESSIONALS. REPORT IMPLIES HOSPITALS AND OTHER CLINICAL FACILITIES PROVIDING ADEQUATE CARE TO ABOUT 25 THOUSAND INPATIENTS IN ORLU-OWERRI AREA, BUT SITUATION IN BUSH CLINICS LESS FAVORABLE.

4. EVALUATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM IN E-C STATE BEYOND DISTRICT LEVEL REPORTED SO FAR AS OBSERVED IN LAGOS 3020 AND 2926. EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE ATTEMPT FULLER, MORE DETAILED EVALUATION BUT POINTS OUT THIS IS SENSITIVE POLITICAL MATTER AS WELL AS RELIEF QUESTION WITH E-C STATE GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD NOT WELCOM INDICATIONS OF CONSPICUOUS CONCERN WITH LEVEL OF DISTRIBUTION PROCESS WHICH THEY ALONE INTEND TO CONTROL AND WHICH LOCAL AID PERSONNEL HAVE THIN JURISDICTIONAL REASON TO MONITOR. MOREOVER, PASSES FOR AID PERSONNEL TO VISIT E-C STATE LIMITED TO THOSE WITH DEMOSTRATED SPECIFIC TECHNICAL MISSION--E.G., HELICOPTERS, GENERATORS, HOUSING, ETC.

5. PROBLEM OF NRC-STATE REHAB COMM RELATIONSHIP CONTINUES AS REPORTED LAST WEEKLY RELIEF ROUNDUP. NRC REPORT (LAGOS 2992) SPELLED OUT ITS INTENTION OT DISENGAGE BUT AGAIN REQUESTED

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E-C STATE TO RECONSIDER TIMETABLE, ESPECIALLY RE QTE EMERGENCY RELIEF AREAS UNQTE. NRC ALSO ASKED THAT FIELD TEAMS AND SPONSORING AGENCIES BE INVITED CONTINUE IN CLOSE COORDINATION WITH STATE GOVTS AND RED CROSS BRANCHES FOR ORDERLY TRANSITION.

6. LAGOS 3022 REPORTED SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RELIEF AND REHAB COMMODITIES ESTABLISHED BY USAID. SYSTEM DESIGNED TO MONITOR ALL COMMODITY ITEMS FROM RECEIPT AT DOCK OR AIRPORT THROUGH INTERNAL TRANSSHIPMENT TO POINT OF USE. WILL FURTHER ENCOURAGE AND ASSIST FED AND STATE AUTHORITIES TO MAINTAIN RECORDS THIS PROPERTY.

7. DESCRIPTION GENERAL CONDITIONS E-C STATE ECONOMY AND POPULATION PROVIDED LAGOS 3020 AND 3041. FOLLOWING CENTRAL BANK INSTRUCTIONS, LARGE VOLUME BIAFRAN CURRENCY BEING COLLECTED FOR DEPOSIT BY CENTRAL BANK TEAMS USING VAULTS OF LOCAL BANKS IN INITIAL STAGE EVENTUAL CURRENCY CONVERSION WHOSE TERMS STILL UNANNOUNCED. DESPITE SLOWNESS CONVERSION PROCESS, SPENDING BY GOVT, MILITARY AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR SEEMS TO HAVE GENERATED ENOUGH NIGERIAN CURRENCY TO SPUR INCREASED BUSINESS ACTIVITY BY MAJOR TRADING COMPANIES AND SMALL IBO TRADERS ALIKE, BOTH BUILDING UP BANK BALANCES. ENUGU BUSINESS ACTIVITY ESTIMATED BY ONE BANKER AHEAD OF PORT HARCOURT. ELSEWHERE, MARKET ACTIVITY LOWER WITH SOME TRADERS MOVING TO NORTHERN PART OF STATE WHILE OTHERS CONTINUE ACCEPT BIAFRAN MONEY IN BUSH AREAS. LAGOS 3023 REPORTS UNICEF DRAFT PROGRAM FOR DOLLARS 4.9 MILLION ON EDUCATION, HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES PROJECTS IN WAR-AFFECTED AREAS. PRESS REPORTED TODAY NSUKKA UNIVERSITY REOPENED WITH 1,600 STUDENTS AT NSUKKA CAMPUS AND 373 AT ENUGU (TOTAL ABOUT TWO-THIRDS PRE-WAR STUDENT POPULATION).
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