

C/S - 1600 INTRO - MEDICI STATEMENT

ROME, AUG. 29, REUTER - ITALY PLEDGED TODAY TO WORK WITH RENEWED ENERGY TOWARDS THE UNIFICATION OF WESTERN EUROPE FOLLOWING THE SOVIET INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

FOREIGN MINISTER GIUSEPPE MEDICI TOLD AN EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT THAT THE CRISIS IN PRAGUE HAD CREATED GRAVE OBSTACLES TO OVERCOMING EAST-WEST DIVISIONS.

HE SAID IT OBLIGED ITALY TO LOOK MORE CLOSELY AT ITS OWN SECURITY AND REAFFIRMED THE GOVERNMENTS FAITH IN THE DEFENSIVE ROLE OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE.

IN A MAJOR POLICY SPEECH, SIGNOR MEDICI CONDEMNED THE SOVIET INVASION AS A "FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND OF THE NORMS SANCTIONS BY THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER."

THE INVASION WAS ALSO IN OPEN CONFLICT WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EAST-WEST NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY, WHICH FORBIDS THE THREAT OR USE OF FORCE AGAINST ANY STATE.

SIGNOR MEDICI ADDED THAT ITALY WAS STILL IN FAVOUR OF SIGNING THE NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY AFTER A PAUSE FOR CONSULTATIONS WITH FRIENDLY AND ALLIED COUNTRIES.

HE SAID IT SHOULD BE RECOGNISED THAT THE SOVIET INVASION HAD CREATED A DEEP CRISIS OF FAITH IN INTERNATIONAL ORDER WHICH COULD HAVE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS IN OTHER WORLD CRISIS SPOTS UNLESS IT WAS RAPIDLY OVERCOME.

BUT HE ADDED: "IT IS THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENTS INTENTION TO CONTINUE TO WORK, AS IT HAS DONE IN THE PAST, FOR A DIALOGUE WITH ALL COUNTRIES, TO WHATEVER SOCIAL SYSTEM OR ALLIANCE THEY MAY BELONG."

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