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SECRETARY-GENERAL INTERRUPTS EUROPEAN VISIT TO RETURN TO NEW YORK

(Received from the Spokesman for the Secretary-General.)

GENEVA, 12 April -- Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar left Geneva this morning for New York, after interrupting his European trip and postponing official visits to Berne, Vienna and Belgrade, because of the international situation.

During the week-end, the Secretary-General had a conversation with United States Secretary of State Alexander Haig, who was, at that time, in Buenos Aires. Before leaving Geneva the Secretary-General also received Gabriel Martinez, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the Geneva Office of the United Nations, at the Ambassador's request. He was also in touch through his aides with the United Kingdom Mission to the United Nations in Geneva, and is expected to meet, upon arrival in New York, with Sir Anthony Parsons, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom.

Asked why the Secretary-General had decided to cut short his European trip, the Secretary-General's Spokesman told the press: "At his press conference last Thursday in Geneva the Secretary-General said: 'I am a rather experienced diplomat and I know very well when and where I am needed.' Now, the Secretary-General feels the moment has come for him to return to Headquarters."

The Spokesman also said that the Secretary-General was gravely concerned by the rising tensions in the Middle East, and had discussed the situation in that area with Secretary of State Haig.

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