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*Mr. Donoghue*  
*for*  
*5/11*

*e.e. PSM PSS, Political Director*  
*A/Sec O'Leary* ✓ *A/Sec Fahy,*  
*A/Sec S. Malone D/As, Amb. Rome*

Bordereau No. 3734

Date 5 November, 1991

To Economic Division, DFA from Permanent Representation, Brussels

For R. Murphy

from A. McDaid

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File No.

Copied directly to R. Murphy, Assistant Secretary, Foreign  
Earnings Division  
D. Holmes, Political Division, (Middle East)  
J. Farrell, Anglo-Irish Division

Subject Minister's meeting with Libyan Foreign Minister  
Al-Bishari, 4 November, 1991, Brussels

1. Minister Al-Bishari referred to his statement at the EC-Maghreb meeting that Libya was open to dialogue. He said he had spoken openly and frankly about sitting around the table and discussing any problems. He thought that there was no problem in the world which could not be solved if those concerned could sit and discuss it.

2. The Minister welcomed the offer of dialogue and the spirit in which it was made. He had said that he regarded it as a genuine offer and worth considering. Referring to the good relations between our peoples the Minister said that certain difficulties do exist. At times things had gone badly off the rails when there had been supplies of arms and munitions to groups carrying out terrorist activity against the Irish people. The Minister hoped in dialogue to be able to convince Libya not to continue such support to those who oppose the Irish Government. He accepted that nothing had happened recently but referred to the Eksund case, the details of which were before a French court. The Minister hoped he could convince Libya not to support those who engaged in violence and subversion.

3. Minister Al-Bishari wished to assure the Minister in an official capacity that Libya does not recognise, does not deal with and will not deal with the IRA. Libya does not supply it

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with arms or money, does not develop contacts with it and has no relationship whatsoever with its operations. Libya condemns terrorist actions against civilians and the abduction of hostages. Libya had exerted pressure on friendly countries in recent weeks in an effort to secure the release of hostages in Lebanon. They had sought the release of all hostages, American and British included, particularly "our very good friend Terry Waite". Minister Al-Bishari wished to assure the Minister that Libya is closing its door to any organisation that is engaged in terrorist activity anywhere in the world, whether in the Middle East, Latin America or Europe (Minister interjected "in particular in Ireland" and Minister Al-Bishari agreed).

4. The Minister said he was glad to hear such words and that he was deeply grateful for the commitment given. He would report Minister Al-Bishari's words with great pleasure to the Irish Government the next day. Minister Al-Bishari said that the Minister could quote his assurances officially and publicly.

5. Turning to Irish-Libyan relations, Minister Al-Bishari raised two issues (i) political, in which he signalled a wish to have the Libyan Ambassador in Rome accredited to Ireland (there would be an official request soon) and (ii) economic, in which he referred to the obstacle to Irish meat exports to Libya. He characterised the problem as altogether a hygienic one. Libya had information about the disease affecting Irish herds. He suggested that the matter could best be dealt with on a hygienic or sanitary basis either through an Irish technical delegation visiting Libya or a Libyan technical delegation visiting Ireland.

6. The Minister said that when a request in respect of the Libyan Ambassador in Rome was received officially he would bring it to Government as soon as possible for consideration and approval in the normal way. The Minister recalled the visit of the Minister for Agriculture to Tripoli and said that we would welcome a visit as soon as possible by the Libyan Minister for Agriculture with his Chief Veterinary Officer and other officials

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to see the facilities in Ireland. The Minister pointed out that Irish beef was sold throughout Europe and the Middle East. There were incidences of this disease (BSE) in imported cattle but these have now been isolated and dealt with.

7. Minister Al-Bishari agreed that such a visit could be useful. Upon his return he would deal with the matter and make the necessary arrangements through diplomatic channels. The Minister thanked Minister Al-Bishari and said that he was sure we could convince the Libyan Minister for Agriculture and his officials that there is no difficulty with Irish meat.