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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EC AID TO INDOCHINA AND DROUGHT AREAS OF AFRICA

WASHINGTON -- March 7, -1973 -- The Commission of the European Communities has urgently proposed food aid for Indochina, it was announced yesterday in Brussels. It is now up to the EC Council of Ministers to take action on the proposal.

The aid, the Commission said, is designed for the more than one million displaced persons in Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam, and South Vietnam. Initially, the aid would include 30,000 tons of husked rice, 1,500 tons of powdered milk, and 600 tons of sugar. The aid would be allocated within the multilateral framework of the International Red Cross.

The Commission also took emergency action to aid African countries hit by one of the worse droughts in years. With the Commission's March 5 approval, The European Development Fund will allocate 19 billion units of account (undevalued dollars) for food aid to these countries.

The countries, all associates of the Community under the Yaoundé Convention, are Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Upper Volta. The drought -- occurring during the Southern Hemisphere winter last year -- severely damaged both crops and livestock. Almost 96,000 tons of food aid have already been sent, both on the Community level and by individual member states, to these countries.