

RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY MR. MUNRO CONCERNING BASES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA RAISED AT STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL DEFENCE ON 19 APR 83

BACKGROUND

1. Soviet ships regularly operate in the South China Sea and Indian Ocean.
2. Soviet naval presence in the South China Sea increased during the Sino-Vietnam war in 1979. Since then, the Soviet Navy has been using and improving port facilities and airfield in Vietnam. Ports usually visited in Vietnam are Da Nang, Ho Chi Minh City and Cam Ranh Bay.
3. Facilities available to the Soviets in these ports are:
  - Da Nang: Use of airfield, use of anchorage, port visits.
  - Ho Chi Minh City: Repair of Soviet auxiliaries and ships visits.
  - Cam Ranh Bay: Floating drydock, floating pier, fuel storage, use of airfield.
4. Regular deployments to the Indian Ocean commenced in 1968. The expulsion of the Soviet Navy from Somalia in 1977 caused no diminution of their operational activities in the general area but they had to concentrate their activities in other local areas for logistic facilities.
5. Facilities available to the Soviets in the Indian Ocean are as follows:
 

SOCOTRA ISLAND	Anchorage, plus repair and supply from Soviet auxiliary ships in the area.
DAHLAK ISLAND	Floating drydock, floating pier, barracks, fuel storage, repair and support ships.
ADEN	Logistic and repair facilities and use of airfield.