

PREM 19/2608

Confidential File

UK / Congolese Relations

CONGO

September 1982

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>4-10-82</del>							
<del>6-1-83</del>							
<del>25-1-83</del>							
<del>29-8-84</del>							
<del>2-9-86</del>							
<del>18-11-86</del>							
<del>2-12-86</del>							
<del>28-12-86</del>							
<del>13-2-87</del>							
<del>16-2-87</del>							
<del>17-2-87</del>							
<del>2/6/87</del>							
10-8-89							

PREM 19/2608



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 August 1989

SUBJECT CC MASTER  
OPS

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. 7148/89

Dear Mr. President,

On the occasion of your re-election as President of the People's Republic of Congo, I send my warm congratulations and best wishes for the future. I look forward to the continuation of the friendship and co-operation which exist between our two governments and nations.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Barber

His Excellency President General de l'Armee  
Arnee Denis Sassou-Nguesso



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

CONFIDENTIAL

9 August 1989

Dear Cardinal,

Message of Congratulations from the Prime Minister to  
President Sassou-Nguesso of Congo on his Re-election

The Prime Minister might like to send a brief message of congratulation to President Denis Sassou-Nguesso following his re-election as Head of State of Congo on 30 July.

President Sassou-Nguesso, who came to power following a bloodless coup in February 1979, heads a relatively stable and non-oppressive regime. Sassou-Nguesso has shown himself committed to the settlement of Southern African problems by peaceful means, and has played a consistently positive role over Namibia and Angola (where he has long standing links with President Dos Santos). Despite Sassou-Nguesso's earlier Marxist leanings, he has taken an increasingly pragmatic line in economic policy, moving away from reliance on Marxist planning and developing increasingly close links with the West. Congo is seeking early resumption of an economic programme supported by the IMF and World Bank and is concerned to promote trade and investment links with Western countries, not least the UK.

Our bilateral relations have improved markedly since we reopened our Embassy in 1983. Sassou-Nguesso called on the Prime Minister when he visited the UK in February 1987 in his capacity as the Chairman of the OAU. He sent the Prime Minister a warm message of congratulations on the occasion of her 10 years in office, and the Prime Minister acknowledged this. In the past 12 months, Mrs Chalker visited Congo as Sassou-Nguesso's guest in July 1988; Mr Patten had talks with Sassou-Nguesso during his visit to Brazzaville for the ACP/EC Ministers meeting in February 1989, and the Congo Prime Minister paid a sponsored visit to the UK in May this year.

Our trade relations have also developed rapidly: Shell, BP and Booker Tate all have significant investments in the Congo and are looking for further investment opportunities. A UK/Congo Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement was signed during the Congo Prime Minister's visit in May.

/We

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

We clearly have interest in encouraging Sassou-Nguesso's continued Western alignment, political and economic, and his helpful role over Angola and Namibia, as well as maintaining the excellent present climate for the continued promotion of our trade and investment interests in Congo. A message from the Prime Minister to Sassou-Nguesso on this occasion would be greatly appreciated and make a significant contribution to these objectives. I accordingly enclose the suggested draft of a message which the Prime Minister might send. If you agree, we would send this by telegram to our post in Congo (we do not propose a signed original).

*Yours sincerely*  
*R H T Gozney*  
(R H T Gozney)  
Private Secretary

Ms Caroline Slocock  
10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

Top Secret

Secret

Confidential

Restricted

Unclassified

PRIVACY MARKING

.....  
In Confidence

Prime Minister's Message

On the occasion of your re-election as President of the People's Republic of Congo, I send my warm congratulations and best wishes for the future. I look forward to the continuation of the friendship and cooperation which exist between our two governments and nations.



PM

cc FCO

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

7 June 1989

Dear Prime Minister,

I hope very much that you enjoyed your visit to Britain on which we were delighted to welcome you. I am very sorry that I was not able myself to meet you but, as you will have appreciated, it has been an exceptionally busy time with the NATO Summit and the visit of President Bush.

It was all the more generous of you to present me with such a fine picture. I was delighted to receive this and thank you for your kindness and generosity.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Monsieur Ange-Edouard Pongui

ea

SUBJECT  
cc master.DA  
file copy

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

17 February 1987

Dear Lynn,

## PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGO

The Prime Minister saw the President of the Congo this morning. President Sassou Nguesso was accompanied by his Foreign Minister.

South Africa

The Prime Minister congratulated President Sassou Nguesso on his election as Chairman of the Organisation for African Unity last year and recalled that his acceptance speech had been admirably pragmatic. She invited the President to explain the OAU's current thinking about South Africa.

President Sassou Nguesso said that the situation in South Africa was becoming worse. Every moment that passed made it more difficult to achieve a solution. But without a solution, there would be disaster. It was inconceivable that 25 million blacks in South Africa would simply allow the situation to drift. Britain had a rich experience of South Africa and extensive contacts. He had visited Lancaster House the day before. It was the symbol of British diplomacy at its most successful in solving a major problem in Southern Africa. The OAU had suggested how progress could be made but they needed the help of the industrialised countries. His personal view was that a solution required a true historic compromise. Only Nelson Mandela was capable of bringing the two sides together and taking the necessary steps towards a multi-racial, democratic society in South Africa.

The Prime Minister set out her views at some length in reply. She found it utterly repugnant that people should be judged by the colour of their skins. Apartheid was intolerable. The majority of whites in South Africa probably now realised that the system had to go. But they were a stubborn people and would not be pushed. Some limited progress had been made by President Botha in removing objectionable features of apartheid. But by demanding economic sanctions, the international community enabled President Botha to claim that every concession he made was punished not rewarded. All her judgement of human nature and of the characteristics of the South African whites convinced

her that sanctions were a recipe for stopping progress not encouraging it. Recent events had borne that out. Those who wanted to see a multi-racial society in South Africa must develop some clear proposals. For instance they should work for a constitutional conference attended by representatives of all political and racial groups in South Africa. There was no question of accepting the ANC as the only representatives of the black Africans. The Zulus, the South African Swazis and the leaders of the homelands were all entitled to be represented. Another essential element was the suspension of violence. Once negotiations started or there was a clear prospect of them, the ANC must suspend violence. She agreed with President Sassou Nguesso that Nelson Mandela was a remarkable man. He ought to be released and the ANC ought to be unbanned. In return there must be a commitment by the ANC to suspend violence. She did not see any realistic prospect of progress before the elections in South Africa in May. Our hope must be that President Botha would receive a mandate to continue on the path of modifying and eventually eliminating apartheid. But black African countries must be realistic in their aims for South Africa. It was not practicable to think in terms of one man one vote in a unitary state. In the long term, the answer lay in a federal South Africa. That was why we had paid particular attention to various proposals made for Natal. She also wanted to stress the importance of contact. Isolation of South Africa only retarded progress towards ending apartheid. Nor were sanctions the answer. They would bear most heavily on black South Africans and deprive them of their livelihoods. Sensible goals for outsiders to pursue were to get rid of apartheid, to provide for democracy and at the same time to keep the South African economy strong.

President Sassou Nguesso said that he appreciated the Prime Minister's frankness. It was only through frank talking that one could move forward. He recalled that the ANC had not always favoured violence, but had been driven to it by apartheid. He agreed that once talks between them and the South African Government opened, there would be no reason for violence and it should be suspended. He had found the Prime Minister's views of great interest and hoped that they could remain in touch.

#### Africa's Economic Problems

President Sassou Nguesso spelled out the main economic problems of black Africa on familiar lines, with emphasis on the low prices of basic export commodities and the problem of debt. African countries had been advised to undertake adjustment and restructuring and had done so. But the international community had failed to respond. African governments felt that their sacrifices had been in vain. There were no solutions in sight. He would like to see Europe, had historic links with Africa, put itself at the head of a movement to rescue black Africa from its crisis.

The Prime Minister said that Britain had a long experience of Africa. Our approach was constructive. We had a very substantial aid programme under which we had given some

£570 million in 1985. We were always ready to help when African countries had problems with the IMF. Africa was potentially a very rich continent but too many African governments had pursued ill-judged policies which had prevented them from realising their natural wealth. We were not guided by ideological considerations in giving help. We had been the first to provide food for Ethiopia in its famine and were training Mozambique's army. Our role was practical and constructive and would continue to be so. South Africa was relevant here. If South Africa were not strong economically, many countries in Africa would be worse off.

#### Bilateral Relations

The Prime Minister made a brief reference to President Sassou Nguesso's efforts to grapple with the Congo's economic problems and his success in concluding an agreement with the IMF. She had no time for Marxism/Leninism anywhere, but it seemed particularly ill-suited to Africa's problems. It took some time to coax the interpreter into rendering this into French, but the President took it equably. He expressed fulsome thanks for the arrangements made for his visit which he had found enjoyable and very useful.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Charles Powell*  
(C.D. Powell)

Lyn Parker, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

PRIME MINISTER

PRESIDENT SASSOU-NGUESSO

President Sassou-Nguesso may arrive with a present.

We have therefore prepared a large Crown Derby bowl for you

to give him if appropriate. (We have a smaller one in

stock if you prefer.)

Content?

Yes

CDP

CHARLES POWELL

16 February 1987

CONFIDENTIAL

PRIME MINISTER

VISIT OF PRESIDENT SASSOU-NGUESSO

You might with reason ask why you are seeing President Sassou-Nguesso. He leads a moderately nasty Marxist-Leninist regime, and we have only exiguous links with the (French) Congo. The answers are: first that he invited himself (and postponed his visit once to attend Machel's funeral) and second that he is current Chairman of the OAU, and of some influence in that role.

The President is an army officer. He speaks only French. He will be accompanied by his Foreign Minister, M. Ndinga-Oba, who entertains warm memories of meeting you when on a sponsored visit here in 1974. The President will be seeing The Queen. He is also paying State Visits to France and Spain.

You may like to start by congratulating him on his election as Chairman of the OAU (last year) and refer to his efforts to end the fighting in Chad.

The main issue which the President wants to discuss is South Africa. He will argue vigorously for comprehensive economic sanctions. The Africans are likely to put forward a draft Security Council resolution on this next week. You will want to explain to him the case against sanctions, in the hope that he will at least understand the arguments even though he will not accept them.

He may also raise Africa's Economic problems. He will argue that the West is not doing enough, is not living up to the obligations it accepted at the UN Special Session on Africa. He may also urge us to attend a conference on African debt which the OAU intend to summon. The outlook is indeed bleak (though better for Congo than for most: they have oil: and

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

reached an agreement with the IMF last July). You will want to remind him how much the United Kingdom is already doing: £570 million in direct and multilateral aid to Sub-Saharan Africa last year, and we hope to maintain that level. We do not fancy an OAU conference on debt: it will raise unrealistic expectations, and it's better to stick to the IMF/IBRD.

If there is time, you may want to mention AIDS briefly. He hosted an international conference on it last year. Getting on for 5% of the population of Congo are said to be infected with HIV.

The attached briefs tell you rather more than you probably want to know about Congo.

CDP.

CDP

13 February, 1987.

JD3AVG

CONFIDENTIAL



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 February 1987

Dear Charles,

cc of  
cc plus  
EBO  
13/2.

Prime Minister's Meeting with President  
Sassou-Nguesso on 17 February 1987 at 0930 hours

President Sassou-Nguesso is visiting the UK at his own request in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU. For his call on the Prime Minister the President will be accompanied by his Foreign Minister and an interpreter, M Ndinga (we are arranging for an interpreter for the Prime Minister). President Sassou-Nguesso has requested that his talks with the Prime Minister focus on Southern Africa and Africa's economic problems.

On South Africa, the President's views on sanctions are opposed to our own. He can be expected to argue forcefully for comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa. Although we shall not convert him to our point of view, it is important, given his Chairmanship of the OAU and that organisation's capacity for trouble-making, that our position is clearly and sympathetically explained to him.

Sassou-Nguesso will also seek to stress to the Prime Minister the burdens of Africa's current economic situation. The subject of AIDS has not been raised with us directly by the Congolese, and we have been given no indication that Sassou-Nguesso will raise this with the Prime Minister. However, in view of the topicality of the subject and the Congolese initiative in hosting an international conference on AIDS, we consider it prudent to brief the Prime Minister accordingly.

The Prime Minister may wish to open the meeting by offering belated congratulations to the President on his election to the OAU Chairmanship in July 1986. A few words of encouragement on the President's efforts in helping bring an end to the Chadian conflict may also be offered (I have included for background a copy of the brief on Chad prepared for the Foreign Secretary).

/I



/ I enclose 4 sets of the following briefs:

- (a) Southern Africa;
- (b) Africa's economic problems;
- (c) AIDS;
- (d) brief on Chad, Congo and the OAU produced for the Foreign Secretary;
- (e) Steering Brief produced for FCO use in connection with this visit and general background brief on Congo;
- (f) personality notes on the President and Foreign Minister.

*Yours ever,*

*L Parker*

(L Parker)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street



VISIT TO UK OF PRESIDENT SASSOU-NGUESSO OF THE CONGO,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU: 16-18 FEBRUARY 1987

STEERING BRIEF

INTRODUCTION

1. At his request and in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU, President Sassou-Nguesso of the Congo is paying a short working visit to the UK from 16-18 February. The President originally planned to visit the United Kingdom in October 1986, but that visit fell through because of his attendance at the late President Machel's funeral in Maputo, Mozambique. As in October, Sassou-Nguesso will combine this visit with a wider European tour which will include France, Belgium and Spain. The visits to France and Spain are State Visits. The President has indicated that he wants his talks with the Prime Minister to focus on Southern African issues and African debt.

2. On assuming the Chairmanship of the OAU last year the President made a relatively moderate and sensible speech asserting that African countries must accept their responsibilities and take serious steps to resolve their own problems. However, his stance on sanctions against South Africa is opposed to our own. At the end of his visit to the United States in October last year he made clear his view that comprehensive economic sanctions could be an effective means to exert pressure on the Government of South Africa. He declared that Europe had so far only taken timid action on sanctions which did not compare with those adopted by the US Senate.

BACKGROUND

3. Bilateral relations are cordial and have improved markedly in the last three years (following the introduction of the Congo's present policy of economic diversification). The Congo broke off diplomatic relations in 1965 over Rhodesia's UDI, but they were restored in 1968 on a non-resident basis, with HM Ambassador, Kinshasa accredited to Brazzaville. In 1983, we opened a one-man resident mission in the Congo at Chargé d'Affaires level and appointed an Honorary Consul in Pointe Noire (Congo's second largest town) in 1986. The Foreign Secretary intends to propose to the Congolese President that our representative in Brazzaville now be upgraded to full Ambassadorial level. This will be presented by way of marking the President's visit to the UK. There are no contentious issues in our bilateral relations.

4. The Congo has been generally unhelpful towards the West in international fora. Since coming to power in 1979 President Sassou-Nguesso has however taken a more pragmatic view of the Congo's external interests and has sought economic assistance and technical expertise from Western countries at the expense of its hitherto close but economically unrewarding relations with the Eastern bloc. Evidence of the President's determination to pursue sensible economic policies, despite the serious misgivings of the ruling political (Marxist) party, was seen in the conclusion of an IMF Standby arrangement in July 1986. It is hoped that in the longer term the realignment of the Congo's domestic and economic policies will lead to some parallel moderation in external affairs.

UK OBJECTIVES

5. (a) to offer belated congratulations to the President on his election to the Chairmanship of the OAU in July last year and to encourage the moderate and sensible stance he took towards Africa's problems during his acceptance speech;
- (b) to promote a better understanding on Sassou-Nguesso's part, and through him within the OAU, of British policies in Africa, particularly towards Southern Africa;
- (c) to explain our position on African economic issues;
- (d) to encourage the President to continue with the economic reforms agreed with the IMF;
- (e) to support the President in sensible moves to help settle the long-standing Chad dispute.

CONGOLESE OBJECTIVES

6. (i) for the call on the Prime Minister, to seek:
- (a) to convince the Prime Minister of the necessity to impose full mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa;
- (b) special treatment of African debt in view of severe economic situation on African continent;



and

- (ii) for the visit generally:  
to encourage a positive UK response to the economic problems of Africa;
- (iii) and to seek maximum aid from UK to assist the Congo in particular and African development in general.

7. Briefs on Southern Africa and on Africa's economic problems have been prepared for the Prime Minister's meeting with President Sassou-Nguesso. The President has indicated his wish to raise some bilateral subjects during his visit which include the possibility of increased aid from UK to assist with the development of the Congo in various fields including language training, agriculture and health. The President will have the opportunity to raise these matters direct with Mr Patten during their bilateral meeting, but it is likely that he will revert to them during his meeting with the Secretary of State which, in addition, might cover African political issues and in particular, Chad. The President may also seek UK assistance with investment in small and medium-sized industries and concessionary financing for the continuation of British projects in the Congo. The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry will be briefed on these matters when he calls on the President.



THE PRESIDENT'S PROGRAMME

8. President Sassou-Nguesso arrives at 1000 hours on 16 February and will be met by a Lord in Waiting and Mr Renton. A welcoming lunch hosted by Mr Biffen will take place at Admiralty House. The President will be offered a reception for OAU Heads of Mission at Lancaster House later that evening hosted by Lady Young. The President calls on the Prime Minister on the morning of 17 February. An audience of HM The Queen will take place that afternoon. Mrs Chalker will host an official dinner at Lancaster House later that evening. During his visit the President will meet the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. He will also meet the Ministers for Overseas Development and Defence Procurement and leaders of the Opposition parties. The President leaves for a State Visit to Spain on the afternoon of 18 February.

West African Department  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
10 February 1987



PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SASSOU-NGUESSO OF THE CONGO,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU: 09.30 HOURS: 17 FEBRUARY 1987

#### SOUTHERN AFRICA

#### OBJECTIVES

- (a) To present and explain UK policy on South Africa and opposition to general economic sanctions.
- (b) To encourage a moderate, realistic approach in the OAU.

#### ARGUMENTS

- Totally reject apartheid. Unjust, institutionalised discrimination. Our objective to work for its replacement by a non-racial, representative system of Government.
- Committed to seeking practical ways to promote peaceful change, in consultation with Commonwealth and with EC Partners. Have called on SAG to take steps to encourage dialogue: release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners; unbanning of ANC/PAC;
- General economic sanctions not the answer. US measures have only made SAG more obdurate and defiant. Moreover, wrong for international community to press FLS to take action which would have disastrous consequences for them.
- Need to build bridges. Must work together to bring both sides to accept need for dialogue. OAU have valuable role to play in this.

#### HIS OBJECTIVES

- (a) To argue for UN mandatory sanctions against SA.
- (b) To equate opposition to sanctions with support for apartheid: and to express concern about internal situation in South Africa.

(c) To express concern about SA intentions towards their neighbours.

#### OUR RESPONSE

##### UN Mandatory Sanctions

- Long explained our opposition to mandatory UN sanctions. Pointless to force us to veto. SAG are the main beneficiaries.
- Effect of mandatory sanctions would be to force neighbours into economic confrontation with South Africa: would do more damage to the neighbours than to South Africa.
- Instead we should all be trying to assist South Africa's neighbours to reduce their economic and transport dependence on South Africa. UK playing a leading role in this. Have just increased our pledge to SADCC (to help rehabilitate transport routes) by a further £10 million to £35 million. Also gave £108 million bilaterally to SADCC Member States in 1985/86.
- Have also recently doubled military training for Mozambique at Nyanga, Zimbabwe; and announced new aid for Zimbabwe (£10 million) and Mozambique (£6.5 million).
- Have also emphasised to SAG that they must respect their neighbours' independence and territorial integrity.

##### SA Internal

- Have left SAG in no doubt about our concern at abuses of human rights, most recently on 19 December on behalf of Twelve. Deplore continuation of forced removals, detentions without charge and further press restrictions.
- No prospect of further political reform at least until after white election.



[If raised]: Africa Fund

- Africa Fund a Non-Aligned initiative. Right we should all help in our different ways. UK aids FLS through other channels (bilateral; EC; SADCC).

- Not UK policy to give financial support to political parties or to organisations committed to use violence to further their political aims.

- No question of UK assistance to FLS to cushion them from effect of sanctions they themselves imposed: self inflicted wound.

Angola - Namibia

- Remain fully committed to Security Council resolution 435 (UN Plan).

- Negotiations best way to bring about implementation. Continue to support US and UN efforts towards this.

- Withdrawal of all foreign troops from region would promote regional peace/stability, create best conditions for lasting Namibian settlement.

## BACKGROUND

Congo/South Africa

1. Like other black African States, the Congo has a strong emotional attachment to the cause of the blacks of South Africa. Sassou-Nguesso is a vocal proponent of comprehensive economic sanctions and armed internal black opposition, although when speaking in his capacity as Chairman of the OAU he tends to moderate his domestic rhetoric. He can be expected to argue with some force against our policy towards South Africa, particularly on sanctions.

South Africa Internal

2. SAG repression has reduced township violence, temporarily at least. Up to 25-30,000 people have been detained without charge since June, though perhaps have subsequently been released. There is no sign of new reform initiatives. President Botha's priority is law and order and rallying the white community. Harsh new press restrictions and recent detentions are further evidence of a hardline approach and of the decreasing influence of foreign opinion upon the SAG. A white general election is to be held on 6 May. There is no prospect of movement on reform before then. At the end of January a report to the South African Catholic Bishops Conference stressed the negative effects of sanctions, particularly on the SAG. The Conference took no decision on the report.

3. On 19 December 1986 Sir Patrick Moberly called on the South African Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr Meiring, to register on behalf of the Twelve concern at growing evidence of serious abuses of human rights. The demarche deplored in particular the apparent continuation of forced removals from black townships, the continuing and indefinite detention without charge of large numbers of people and the imposition of the new press restrictions.

South Africa/Neighbours

British Military Assistance

4. Training of Mozambican officers/NCOs by BMATT at Nyanga Zimbabwe started in February 1986. Courses run for 12 weeks and have a complement of 60 students. Originally planned for one year, the programme has now been extended until the end of 1988 and the number of students on each course doubled to 120. This training is greatly appreciated by both Mozambique and the other Front Line States as a demonstration of HMG's commitment to help in the restoration of peace and stability in the region.

5. Africa Fund

The Africa Fund, chaired by India, has been set up by the Non-Aligned Movement to provide assistance to cushion the FLS from the effects of sanctions. To date some \$70 million is said to have been pledged, mostly by India. Non-NAM countries are to be invited to contribute. The ANC and PAC are likely to receive aid from the Fund. We shall not be contributing.

6. UN Security Council

The Africans are likely to put forward a draft Security Council Resolution on South Africa, including a call for sanctions, in the week beginning 16 February. African intentions not yet clear, but indications are that the draft will be mandatory and probably selective on lines of US Congress model. We would veto mandatory sanctions.

7. Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC)

At the SADCC annual meeting held in Gaborone, 5-6 February, Mr Patten's announcement of a further £10 million allocation for SADCC projects (bringing total UK pledges to £35 million) was warmly received. Our main commitments are to the rehabilitation of FLS transport routes, which will help to reduce these states' economic dependence on South Africa. The UK's gross bilateral aid to SADCC members in the financial year 1985/86 was £108 million.

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SASSOU-NGUESSO OF THE CONGO,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU, 0930 hrs 17 FEBRUARY 1987

BRIEF ON AFRICA'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Objectives

- (a) Praise Africa's constructive approach at UN Special Session.
- (b) Convince him debt problems being handled sympathetically and practically.

Argument

- (a) Welcome refreshingly constructive approach by all sides at UN Special Session on Africa. Hope to build on new sense of realism.
- (b) Recognise severity of Africa's economic problems. No easy solutions. Must continue to work patiently at adjustment with support of IMF, World Bank, donors and creditors.
- (c) Welcome Congo's agreement with IMF. Realise difficult decisions involved but convinced right to reach agreement. Important now to ensure that programme fully implemented. Glad to participate in Paris Club rescheduling.

Tactical Argument

Terms of Paris Club rescheduling for Congo generous: 90% principal and interest.

His Objectives

- (a) Highlight Africa's worsening economic prospects. Commodity prices very low, and protectionism in EC restricting exporting opportunities.
- (b) Criticize developed countries for not meeting obligations undertaken at UN Special Session.

(c) Africa's debt service burden constraining growth. Need new initiatives.

(d) OAU mandated to call for special conference on African debt. Urge UK to attend.

(e) To ensure that Africa's problems are highlighted at UNCTAD VII.

#### Your Response

(a) Agree outlook poor; low commodity prices due to over supply and changes in demand; generally lower oil price helps most African countries.

Recent rise should help Congo and other producers. Lome gives generous access to many ACP products. Uruguay round will improve trade liberalisation: special treatment for least developed countries.

(b) Recognise Africa's need for adequate concessional assistance to support its adjustment efforts. UK has long record of substantial support to Sub Saharan Africa. Provided £570<sup>m</sup> directly and indirectly in 1985. Hope to maintain these levels, especially where can support economic reforms. Supported establishment of IMF SDR 2.7bn Structural Adjustment Facility, \$12.4bn IDA 8.

(c) Recognise severity of debt burden, but no alternative to existing case by case approach to debt. Adjustment essential with IMF/IBRD guidance and donor/creditor support.

(d) Do not support proposal for conference on debt. Could lead to unrealistic expectations. Should continue discussions in existing competent fora eg IMF/IBRD.

(e) Look forward to constructive dialogue at UNCTAD VII on issues within UNCTAD's mandate.

#### Press Line

- Discussion covered a wide range of economic issues.

Background

1. UN Special Session on Africa took place from 27 to 31 May 1986. Session was generally constructive, with African side led by President Diouf of Senegal then OAU Chairman accepting responsibility for many of their economic problems. Donors undertook to assist adjustment process, but without specific commitments.
  
2. African economic prospects bleak: growth in 1987 expected to be 1.2%; per capita GDP -1.6% compared to 0.6% per capita growth for developing countries generally. Total debt for Sub-Saharan Africa about \$90m. Debt service ratio 27% in 1985 and expected to rise further. Problems caused by low commodity prices, which generally outweigh beneficial effects of low oil prices; slow growth in industrialised countries, and inappropriate domestic policies eg persistent overvalued exchange rates in some countries, inadequate producer prices, excessive public sector deficits. But many countries now adjusting eg new IMF programmes agreed for Tanzania, Ghana, Gambia, Congo, Ivory Coast and Nigeria. In response to debt problems donors have adopted some measures to increase flow of resources: IBRD Special Facility for Africa, IMF Structural Adjustment Facility which aims IMF concessional resources to support structural adjustment; IDA 8 agreed at \$12.4 bn including UK voluntary contribution of \$15 m.
  
3. Congo reached agreement with IMF in July 1986 on standby arrangement but there are some signs of the programme going off track. Congo went to Paris Club in July and secured generous rescheduling: 90% principal and interest repayable over 9 years with 4 years grace. This was less than 5 year multi year rescheduling arrangement sought by Congolese, but they seemed content with final outcome.
  
4. Small UK TC programme to Congo.

RESTRICTED

5. Seventh Session of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development will take place in Geneva 9-13 July. Past sessions have been confrontational. We hope positive atmosphere at UN Special Session will continue at UNCTAD VII; important UNCTAD keeps within its mandate and does not step ~~on~~ GATT or IMF/Bank territory.

Economic Relations Department  
10 February 1987

RESTRICTED



PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SASSOU-NGUESSO OF  
THE CONGO, CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU, 0930 HOURS, 17 FEBRUARY  
1987

## AIDS

### OBJECTIVES

(a) To encourage the President to recognise the need for international cooperation and to give a lead to fellow members of the Organisation of African Unity.

### ARGUMENT

(a) UK has already given £250,000 to WHO for AIDS-related assistance. We intend to give more.

(b) We are taking every appropriate opportunity to raise awareness of international community, eg recent discussion in European Council under British Presidency.

### TACTICAL ARGUMENT

Glad to learn that Congo has established national AIDS Committee; what plans to develop control and prevention programme and coordination with other countries in Africa and beyond?

How is cooperation with WHO working?



HIS OBJECTIVES

(a) (Possibly) to seek AIDS-related assistance from the UK.

YOUR RESPONSE

(a) Draw attention to our present and planned support for WHO's AIDS-related activities.

PRESS LINE

Agreed on seriousness of problem; agreed on need for international cooperation and central coordinating role of WHO.

Narcotic Control and AIDS Unit  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
12 February 1987

RESTRICTED

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT SASSOU-NGUESSO OF THE CONGO,  
CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU, 0930 HOURS, 17 FEBRUARY 1987

AIDS

BACKGROUND

1. Up to 50,000 AIDS cases in Africa; over 2 million already infected with HIV.
2. International efforts to combat AIDS focussed on World Health Organisation's (WHO's) Global Programme for the Prevention and Control of AIDS.
3. UK have contributed £250,000 to WHO Programme and intend to give more when we have considered new strategy currently being drawn up by the WHO (and expected in about four weeks).
4. UK taking opportunities to promote awareness of problem internationally eg at last European Council.
5. WHO have identified Congo as one of 4 priorities for assistance. US \$120,000 already allocated to Congo.
6. Congo hosted first Conference on AIDS in Africa in November 1986. Two ODA experts attended.
7. Congo has established national AIDS Committee, but has not as far as we know yet developed control and prevention programme. Government are nevertheless regularly monitoring high risk groups.
8. Congo has sought help of WHO in conducting six-month survey, which shows prevalence rate of HIV of 4.6% in population as a whole. But much lower in rural areas (where only 20% of Congolese population live) and children virtually unaffected.

NARCOTICS CONTROL AND AIDS UNIT  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGO TO THE UK:  
16-18 FEBRUARY 1987

Brief No : CHAD: CONGO AND THE OAU

POINTS TO MAKE

1. Follow closely President's and OAU's peace initiatives in Chad dispute. Ultimately political rather than military solution is the answer.
2. Chad problem can no longer be seen in terms of national reconciliation. Problem international. Unlikely to be solved unless Libya withdraws occupation troops from North. Last call for foreign troops to withdraw from Chad was not respected by the Libyans. (If pressed): French troops have different status from Libyans. French there at invitation of Chad Government.
3. Hear news of many peace initiatives involving many different parties. How does Nigerian/Sudanese/Algerian initiative relate to President's mission? President's view of current situation and likely prospects for peace in Chad?

VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGO TO THE UK:  
16-18 FEBRUARY 1987

Brief No : CHAD : CONGO AND THE OAU

ESSENTIAL FACTS

1. The history of Chad since independence in 1960 is one of friction between the North and South of the country, resulting in over 20 years of internal conflict. The genesis of recent Chadian armed opposition in the North can be traced back to 1979. Following the formation of the then legitimate Government of National Unity (GUNT) under Nigerian and OAU auspices, a dispute developed between the then President Goukouni and his Prime Minister, Habre. In 1980 Goukouni dismissed Habre from the government and formed a defence pact with Libya. Habre ousted Goukouni from N'djamena in 1982 and has remained in control of Chad since. Habre is internationally recognised as the legitimate President of Chad.

2. Libyan occupation of the northernmost area of Chad however predates the recent troubles. Within months of Colonel Qadhafi's successful coup in 1969 against the former monarchy, Libya began intervening in Chad. In 1973, it occupied the Aouzou strip, to which Libya has some tenuous claim. Aouzou is a 60-mile wide stretch of mountainous desert in Chad's far north said, so far with little concrete evidence, to be rich in mineral and uranium deposits. An OAU mediation Committee

established in 1977 in response to Chadian protests of Libyan occupation of the Aouzou strip in particular, and the north in general, has made little headway. This has been due largely to Libyan intransigence. OAU involvement has also involved practical assistance to Chad in recent years. An OAU peacekeeping force was sent to Chad in 1981 with material aid from several Western countries including France and the United Kingdom.

3. For a number of years, President Sassou-Nguesso (along with President Bongo of Gabon) has held an OAU Mandate to find a solution to the troubles in Chad. During his OAU Chairmanship acceptance speech in July 1986 Sassou-Nguesso reiterated his resolve to work towards bringing an end to the Chadian problem.

4. One of the most practical steps Sassou-Nguesso has taken towards solving the Chad problem was to arrange a reconciliation conference in Congo in March 1986. Both Presidents Sassou-Nguesso and Diouf of Senegal (then Chairman of the OAU) tried to bring the warring factions together under the aegis of OAU-sponsored talks. President Habre showed up but Goukouni did not. Goukouni issued a statement saying that he had decided not to attend because the OAU did not condemn France for its intervention in Chad. The theory which gained most currency was that Goukouni was prevented from travelling to Congo by the Libyans. This theory has added verisimilitude since Goukouni was seriously injured by Libyan troops and is now under some form of house arrest in Tripoli. His supporters in Northern Chad have switched sides and now support Habre's efforts to dislodge the Libyans.

5. Since last year, fighting between the Libyans and Chadian forces has intensified both in the air and on the ground. The Libyans continue to occupy some 40% of Chadian territory North of the 16th Parallel. With increasing logistical support and military aid from France and the United States, President Habre has made some important military gains since the beginning of this year. Chadian forces now occupy and control two key towns in the otherwise Libyan-controlled North. Bolstered by these gains, President Habre appears ready to attempt an all-out offensive against the Libyans. Despite their continued mendacious assertions that there are no Libyan troops in Chad, it is clear that Libya is currently increasing the number of troops (from 10,000 to perhaps 20,000), combat aircraft and artillery in Northern Chad. Libyan losses in recent fighting (estimated between 1,000 and 1,600 men) and the loss of face that Qadhafi's Chadian adventure is causing within his own armed forces may strengthen Qadhafi's resolve to score some quick points in Chad. The French (who are militarily and politically close to Habre) are of the opinion that major fighting is imminent between Habre's forces and Libyan troops.

6. Events in Chad have constantly been surrounded by talk of peace initiatives. Apart from OAU mediation by Congo and Gabon, Sudan, Algeria and Nigeria are also involved in the increasingly confused arena of "mediation talks". The Chadians have recently reiterated their willingness to talk direct with Libya on ending the conflict but have rejected what they have described as "diplomatic gesticulations". Nonetheless, it seems

unlikely that, whilst the Chadians scent victory, they will be much inclined to compromise. Habre is impatient with OAU initiatives and angry at African fence-sitting over Libya's occupation of Northern Chad.

Sassou-Nguesso met Goukouni in Algeria by Libyan arrangement en route to Paris. President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Chirac, whom President Sassou saw on 10 February, will have made it clear to him that they will not put pressure on Habre to meet OAU aspirations for a peaceful settlement until Sassou or the OAU acknowledge that the conflict is not one of internal factionalism but a dispute between Chad and Libya, and that Libyan forces are in a different position from French forces in Chad which are there at the invitation of the Government. (Sassou saw President Mitterrand and Prime Minister Chirac on 10 February).

TREAAF5 (Brfg)

CONFIDENTIAL

West African Department

11 February 1987



VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGO TO THE UK:  
16-18 FEBRUARY 1987

BRIEF NO 1: BACKGROUND ON THE CONGO

HISTORY

1. The People's Republic of the Congo is a Marxist-Leninist West African State of about 1½ times the area of the United Kingdom, with a population of approximately 2 million.

2. Formerly part of French Equatorial Africa, the Congo became autonomous within the French community in 1958 and attained full independence in 1960, when the former prime minister, Abbe Fulbert Youlou, was elected President. Youlou's regime exacerbated tribal tensions and was toppled in 1963 in an army coup. There followed the formation of a one-party Marxist-Leninist government in 1964 under President Massamba-Debat, with the subsequent introduction of state economic planning. Between 1964 and 1979 there were several army coups and military heads of state. President Sassou-Nguesso came to power following a bloodless coup in February 1979.

INTERNAL POLITICAL

3. Sassou-Nguesso's period of office has been politically stable and relatively prosperous. So far, he has faced no evident serious challenge. He was "re-elected" for a further five year term of office in July 1984. President Sassou-Nguesso is head of the single ruling party, the Parti Congolais du Travail and rules via a 10-member Politbureau and a 75 member Central Committee. There are



19 Ministers in the Congolese Government. Sassou-Nguesso has been careful to ensure that he controls all the important decision-making bodies in the country. He has made himself President of the Party's Central Committee, President of the Republic and Head of Government. He also holds the Defence and Internal Security Portfolios. The President comes from a minority tribe in the North of the country and has perpetuated the political dominance of the North (the Army and internal security authorities are also the preserves of Northerners) although the Congo's economic strength lies in the South. Sassou-Nguesso's political leanings are not as far to the left as the country's image would lead one to expect. He is often referred to in the French press as a 'reformed Marxist'. He has filled many senior government positions with technocrats in place of old guard Marxist ideologues.

4. During his time in office Sassou-Nguesso has had the advantage, until the oil-price fall, of income from relatively large oil reserves. This enabled him to accelerate significantly the economic development of the country. The Congolese people have therefore become comparatively well-off by African standards. This has helped to provide political stability. However as the economic adjustment measures to counter the current drastic reduction in the price of oil take effect, civil discontent may increase. Student demonstrations (linked to the non-payment of student grants) at Brazzaville University in November 1986, seen as a challenge to the government's authority, were quickly and firmly put down by troops, further unrest in the traditionally militant student community cannot be ruled out. The reform of



state enterprises required by the IMF agreement (para 5) also poses a very serious dilemma: large sections of the population are employed by the State. The enterprises are grossly inefficient and uneconomic. But widespread dismissals will result in serious unemployment which, if not effectively dealt with, could pose a threat to political stability and Sassou-Nguesso's grip on power.

#### ECONOMY

5. Following a rapid increase in oil export receipts in the early 1980s the Congo embarked on an ambitious 5-year development plan (1982-86) which concentrated on improving the country's infrastructure and productive base. However, the drop in oil prices in 1985 and 1986 coupled with a depreciation of the US dollar against the local currency, the CFA franc, led to a sharp reduction in government revenues and a deterioration in the balance of payments. The Congo is sub-Saharan Africa's fourth largest oil exporter after Nigeria, Gabon and Angola. Oil production is currently about 6m tonnes a year and oil revenues account for over 80% of the country's export earnings. Government revenue imbalances were exacerbated by a disappointing economic and financial performance of the public enterprise sector which resulted in a sizeable accumulation of domestic and external arrears. The Congolese Government adopted its own structural adjustment programme in mid 1985, but the further reduction in oil prices at the end of the year led to further losses in oil export receipts and budgetary revenues.



6. Sassou-Nguesso's government was left with little alternative but to request an IMF rescheduling in May 1986. This was originally thought to be politically unacceptable in an avowedly Marxist-Leninist state, but negotiations went surprisingly smoothly and a 20 month stand-by arrangement was approved in July 1986. The first UK/Congo Debt Rescheduling Agreement has now been negotiated and is about to be formalised by an Exchange of Notes. Since the conclusion of the IMF agreement the Congolese have implemented strong economic measures in the form of a 50 per cent cut in the investment budget (cut by a further 22% in December 1986) and an interim two year adjustment programme. There is still a large financing gap (approx. £40m) however and the IMF consider it crucial that adjustment policies for 1987 be further strengthened in order to reach a viable balance of payments and budget by 1991-92. Although there have been some slippages in the last 6 months, the Government is endeavouring to put into action major policy reforms which include cuts in public spending and investment, strict credit ceilings and a revision of its socialist policies towards public sector ownership in many parts of the economy. This will mean dismantling political control over the parastatal industries and transferring their management and activities to the private sector. Although the Congo's outlook for 1987 and the medium term remains difficult, the country has considerable potential to develop the forestry and agricultural sectors, which would not require large investment and imports.



## FOREIGN RELATIONS

7. The Congo has generally been unhelpful towards the West in international affairs. It gave political support to Argentina in the Falklands dispute and in various UN and NAM resolutions. It provides rest/recreation facilities for Cuban troops from Angola. The Congo has cordial but restrained relations with the Soviet Union with whom it signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation in 1981. The Soviet Union has provided small amounts of aid to the Congo but has been denied bases and communications facilities in the country. In practice the Congo looks to Western Europe for development cooperation and trade. In doing so, Sassou-Nguesso has encouraged a policy of diversification in economic and commercial matters towards Western countries other than France (Congo's traditional trading partner). In July 1986 President Sassou-Nguesso was elected Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity. He has seen this as an opportunity to boost his own and his country's image on the international stage, modelling himself on his predecessor as OAU Chairman, President Diouf of Senegal. Sassou-Nguesso's mediation efforts in the long-standing Chad conflict (which remains unresolved), his tour of North America in October 1986 and forthcoming visit to Europe are evidence of this.

8. Unfortunately, President Sassou-Nguesso's visit to the United States last year did not go according to plan. Whilst he met Vice-President Bush, Secretary of State Schultz and Chester Crocker, the proposed meeting with President Reagan did not take place. This is thought to have been linked to the Congolese Foreign Minister's



speech at the UN Special Session on Namibia when he compared South Africa with Israel and Nazi Germany. This was not received well in the United States (and least of all by the Jewish lobby). The Congolese President issued a written apology but this was not apparently enough to satisfy President Reagan. By comparison Sassou-Nguesso's visit to Canada immediately afterwards was a great success.

West African Department  
10 February 1987



SASSOU-NGUESSO, Denis. Colonel

President of the People's Republic of Congo since 1979 and Minister of Defence and Security

Born 1943 in the North (Mbochi tribe).  
Professional army officer. Studied in France.

- 1969 Commander of the Land Forces and of the Brazzaville Region and Member of Bureau Politique of the Parti Congolais du Travail (PCT).
- 1977 Member of the Ruling 11-man Military Committee set up after the assassination of former Head of State, Ngouabi.
- 1977 First Vice-President and Minister of Defence.
- 1979 Becomes Head of State in a "palace coup";
- 1984 Re-elected for further five-year term.
- 1986 (July) : Elected Chairman of OAU.

Tough and well-educated, his power base has always been in the party and the army. In private he is rather impassive but expresses himself competently. In public he is not a charismatic orator, particularly when speaking without notes. Despite this, and the fact that he comes from a minority Northern tribe, he is still reasonably popular with the people and during tours up country he is well received. In the past has been associated with hardline pro-Moscow policies. However in recent years, he has shown himself to be more pragmatic. Whilst maintaining links with the country's historical partner, France, Sassou-Nguesso has encouraged a policy of diversification in economic and commercial matters towards other Western countries.

Since late 1983 he has been actively involved in the Chad conflict, acting as a go-between for all the rival factions with a view to achieve a national reconciliation.

The President speaks French. He does not speak English but understands a little.

Married to Antoinette Sassou-Nguesso (her second marriage). She has several children from previous marriage.

West African Department  
5 February 1987



**NDINGA-OBA, Antoine**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, since August 1984**

Born in 1941 in North (Mbochi tribe).

Studied in France, obtained a PhD in Linguistics (1972)

- 1972: Director of INSSSED (Teacher Training Department of Marien Ngouabi University - the only University of Congo)
- 1974: Made a successful official visit to London
- 1976: Rector of Marien Ngouabi University
- 1977: Minister of Education
- 1979: Member of the Central Committee
- 1984: Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co operation

A professional linguist. Articulate and agreeable personality and is President's main voice on foreign affairs matters. He is a close member of the President's family. Well disposed towards Britain and remembers with affection his meeting with Mrs Thatcher during his sponsored visit to the UK in 1974.

Takes an active interest in British Council work in Congo and in Congolese scholars in the UK. Was partly responsible for the introduction of the British Council programme in Congo.

Speaks French. Does not speak any English.

Married with 6 children.

West African Department  
5 February 1987

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

Telegram

for enquiries dial the number shown in your dialling instructions

British TELECOM

SUBJECT  
CC MASTER  
OPS

R29

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL NO. T250/86

NNNN

28 DEC 1986/0830

ZCZC CLM2841 PLA057 KGF952 00681 679

GXXX CY KGBE 133

BRAZZAVILLETELEX 133/126 27/12 1736

*Downey*  
*FW 1*

ETAT

A SON EXCELLENCE MADAME MARGARET THATCHER

PREMIER MINISTRE GRANDEBRETAGNE

LONDRES

62995

A L'OCCASION DU NOUVEL AN JE SUIS TRES HEUREUX DE VOUS ADRESSER MES  
VOEUX PERSONNELS DE BONHEUR DE SANTE ET DE REUSSITE STOP JE SAISIS  
CETTE OCCASION POUR VOUS ASSURER DE MA TOTALE DISPONIBILITE A  
OEUVRER DANS

COL ETAT 62995

PAGE/2

LE SENS D'UNE ETROITE CONCERTATION AVEC VOTRE PAYS DANS LA RECHERCHE  
DES SOLUTIONS APPROPRIEES AUX PROBLEMES AUQUELS FAIT FACE LE CONTINEN  
T

AFRICAIN STOP JE SUIS CONVAINCU QUE VOTRE PAYS PEUT APPORTER UNE  
CONTRIBUTION NECESSAIRE ET UTILE A LA RESOLUTION DES SITUATIONS  
DIFFICILES QUE TRAVERSE L'AFRIQUE STOP VEUILLEZ AGREER

COL APPROPRIEES

PAGE/3

MADAME LE PREMIER MINISTRE LES ASSURANCES DE MA TRES HAUTE CONSI-  
DERATION STOP ET FIN

HE. COLONEL DENIS SASSOU-NGUESSO

PRESIDENT DU CC DU PCT

PRESIDENT DE LA REPUBLIQUE

CHEF DU GOUVERNEMENT

PRESIDENT EN EXERCICE DE L'OUR

*President of The Congo*



BH

bc PC

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

2 December 1986

Dear Sir,

BF 11

Thank you for your letter of 1 December proposing a reinstatement of President Sassou-Nguesso meeting with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister could see the President from 0930 to 1015 on Tuesday 17 February.

Yours sincerely,

C D POWELL

Colin Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

BMT



CDP

930

- 10.15  
TVE 17 Feb

CR

2/12.

CCPC

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 December 1986

CR

Can we fit in  
a 45 minute call  
between 16-18 Feb?

CR

Dear Charles,

As foreshadowed in President Sassou-Nguesso's letter to the Prime Minister of 25 October, the Congolese have asked for reinstatement of the President's working visit to London from 16 to 18 February 1987. As in the original proposal, Sassou-Nguesso's visit to London would be part of a wider European tour including France, Belgium and Spain. The President has again requested talks with the Prime Minister on Southern African affairs and African economic questions.

The Foreign Secretary believes that the arguments in favour of a call on the Prime Minister set out in my letter to you of 1 September (copy attached) remain valid.

I should therefore be grateful to know if the Prime Minister can agree to receive President Sassou-Nguesso, who proposes to arrive in London on the morning of 16 February, departing at midday on 18 February.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
No 10 Downing St

CONGO

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICE OF THE  
ATTACHÉ

RELATIONS

9/02





Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

18 November 1986

CDP  
R/M

Dear Charles,

Personal Message from President  
Sassou-Nguesso of the Congo to the Prime Minister

DATED 25.10.86

Our Embassy in Brazzaville have forwarded the attached personal message from President Sassou-Nguesso to the Prime Minister, expressing regret that he was unable to pay a working visit to UK in October as arranged, owing to his attendance at the late President Machel's funeral. The President hopes to be able to reinstate the visit for the beginning of next year and his officials will propose new dates accordingly.

The letter does not call for a reply.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

Brazzaville, le 25 OCTOBRE 1986

*Le Président de la République,  
Chef du Gouvernement  
Président en exercice de l'O.U.A.*


*Madame Le Premier Ministre,*

*J'ai l'honneur de me référer, pour m'en féliciter, à l'accueil bienveillant que Vous avez bien voulu réserver à mon désir d'effectuer une visite de travail dans votre pays en ce mois d'Octobre, afin de m'entretenir avec Votre Excellence des questions bilatérales et des problèmes relatifs au Continent Africain.*

*En Vous réitérant ma ferme volonté d'effectuer la visite projetée, j'ai le grand regret de Vous faire savoir, qu'en raison de la brutale disparition de Son Excellence le Président de la République Populaire du Mozambique, le Maréchal SAMORA MOISES MACHEL, je ne suis plus en mesure de me rendre dans votre pays à la date indiquée.*

*J'ai demandé à Mon Gouvernement de prendre contact avec le vôtre afin qu'une date plus convenable soit arrêtée et je voudrais, pour ma part, Vous faire savoir que je souhaite effectuer cette visite dès le début de l'année 1987.*

*Je Vous prie d'agréer, Madame Le Premier Ministre, les assurances de ma très haute considération./-*

  
Colonel Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO./-

SON EXCELLENCE  
MADAME MARGARET THATCHER  
PREMIER MINISTRE DE GRANDE BRETAGNE

- LONDRES -

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T 1934/86

SUBJECT CC MASTER

OPS

~~FREE DOM CONGO~~

~~2014~~

STS 640/86

TRANSLATED FROM FRENCH

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Work - Democracy - Peace

Brazzaville, 25 October 1986

The President of the Republic  
Head of Government  
Acting President of the OAU

Dear Prime Minister,

I have the honour and the pleasure to refer to the kindness with which you welcomed my wish to make a working visit to your country in October to discuss with you matters of bilateral interest and problems concerning the African continent.

While reiterating my firm intention to make the projected visit, I deeply regret to inform you that as a result of the sudden death of the President of the People's Republic of Mozambique, Marshal Samora Moises Machel, I am no longer able to come to your country on the date given.

I have asked my Government to approach yours to agree on a more suitable date and I, for my part, wish to inform you that I should like to make the visit early in 1987.

[Complimentary close]

[signed] Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher  
Prime Minister of Great Britain  
London

CONFIDENTIAL

file PA



ce PG

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

2 September 1986

Thank you for your letter of 1 September about the proposed visit of President Sassou-Nguesso of the Congo, the current Chairman of the OAU.

The Prime Minister would be prepared to see President Sassou-Nguesso on 28 October at 1045 for 45 minutes but would not be able to entertain him. If you think such a meeting would be adequate for President Sassou-Nguesso's purposes I should be grateful if you could convey the appropriate invitation.

X  
cancelled

(Charles Powell)

C. R. Budd, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

✓

10.45-11.20

CPD

OC

Prime Minister

CONFIDENTIAL

①



In all normal circumstances, he would not be worth your time.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

But he is current chairman of the OAU. This is a reason for seeing him, though not conclusive.

1 September 1986

Dear Charles,

Agree to see him? Yes  No

President Sassou-Nguesso of the Congo, the current Chairman of the OAU, has told us he would like to pay a working visit to the UK from 28 to 29 October, as part of a European tour. He has requested talks with the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary on Southern African affairs and African economic questions.

The Foreign Secretary believes there is a case, though not a very strong one, for a brief call by Sassou-Nguesso on the Prime Minister. The justification lies firmly in his Chairmanship of the OAU. You will recall that the Prime Minister saw President Diouf of Senegal in his capacity as Chairman last year, and subsequently took care to keep him informed about her thinking on South Africa with a view to encouraging his constructive approach to the OAU's role.

CDP 1/9

The Foreign Secretary believes it would be useful to expose Sassou-Nguesso too to a forceful presentation of the British case on South Africa. There is also the danger that to refuse this request from the Chairman of the OAU could lead to accusations of intransigence and/or indifference.

Our bilateral interests in the Congo are limited, though relations have become much more cordial over the last few years. Diplomatic relations (broken over Rhodesia) were restored at their request in 1968, with non-resident Ambassadors at Kinshasa and Paris respectively. A Charge d'Affaires resident in Brazzaville was appointed (primarily for commercial reasons, in 1983). Despite its standard Marxist rhetoric, the Congo has consistently denied the Soviet Union's requests for military bases and communications facilities. It has increasingly looked to the West for development cooperation, investment and trade, and has, this year, taken the politically unpalatable step of turning to the IMF for assistance in the economic problems caused by the fall in the world oil price (oil contributes some 90% of Congo's export revenue). UK exports grew from £6.2 million in 1984 to £12.1 million in 1985. In 1986 (January to June) they stand at £5.3 million).

I should be grateful to know if the Prime Minister can agree to receive President Sassou-Nguesso. If the timing is not convenient you may like to consider offering alternative dates.

Yours ever,  
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

CONFIDENTIAL

**SUBJECT**

cc Master  
ops.



FILE

VC

cc: FO

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

29 August, 1984

**PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T 149184.**

Dear Mr. President.

Please accept my congratulations and best wishes on your re-election as President of the People's Republic of the Congo. I look forward to continuing the cooperation and harmonious relations which have developed between our two governments during your first five years as President of your country.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso

kw

RESTRICTED



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

17 August 1984

CP 0/1

Dear David

RE-ELECTION OF PRESIDENT OF THE CONGO

President Sassou-Nguesso has been re-elected for a second five-year term as President of the People's Republic of the Congo. Messages of congratulations have been sent to him by Presidents Reagan, Mitterrand and von Weizsaecker, and by many African leaders.

Although on many international issues the Congo continues to adopt a disobliging stance from our point of view, it is firmly committed to trade with the West and we aim to secure as large a share of this as we can. To this end we reopened a Mission in Brazzaville last year. A congratulatory message on behalf of the Prime Minister would usefully reinforce these efforts. As Sassou-Nguesso is Head of Government as well as Head of State the message would come more appropriately from the Prime Minister rather than The Queen.

A short draft message of congratulations is attached. If necessary it could be held over until the Prime Minister returns from holiday, but if it could issue before then so much the better.

yours ever

Stuart Eldon

S G Eldon  
PS/Lady Young

David Barclay Esq  
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

DSR 11 (Revised)

MESSAGE

DRAFT: ~~minutes/letter/teletype/telegram/note~~

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:  
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO: President Sassou-Nguesso

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

*HE Colonel Denis S-N*

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

"Please accept my congratulations and best wishes on your re-election as President of the People's Republic of the Congo. I look forward to continuing the cooperation and harmonious relations which have developed between our two governments during your first five years as President of your country."

CAVEAT.....

*Pl. Type  
for P.M.  
Signature  
CDP*

*CDP*

Enclosures—flag(s).....

010

T

Congo

cc Master  
Ops.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 January, 1983

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T38183

N. B. P. R.

MR 25/11.

See John.

Letter from the Prime Minister of Congo

// The Congolese Foreign Minister, M. Pierre Nzé, paid a successful visit to the UK from 17-19 January. When Mr Pym received him on 18 January, he accepted on Mrs Thatcher's behalf a letter addressed to her from the Prime Minister of Congo. The letter and a translation are attached.

No reply seems to us necessary.

*Yours*

(R B Bone)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street



TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO MRS THATCHER FROM THE PRIME MINISTER  
OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Dear Mrs Thatcher

On the threshold of this New Year, I am pleased to send you, Excellency, and your family, my best wishes for happiness, health and prosperity, and to tell you how grateful I am for the invitation which your Government has extended to my Foreign Minister. Thank you very much for it.

In the face of the present grave and worrying state of international affairs, the Congolese people, its Party, its Government and its Head of State, President Sassou-Nguesson, are all anxious to strengthen their bonds of friendship with all the nations of the world who embrace liberty and peace.

Your eminent role in the search for harmony amongst nations and the stand which your fine country has always taken in favour of international cooperation, cause my country to count the United Kingdom of Great Britain amongst her friends.

The official visit of M Pierre Nzé, like that made by M Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou, my Finance Minister, in September 1982, constitutes for both our countries a happy opportunity to strengthen our bilateral relations.

I am persuaded in advance that Your Excellency will welcome M Pierre Nzé with the understanding necessary for him to accomplish his mission.

High consideration .... etc

# *République Populaire du Congo*

*Travail - Démocratie - Paix*

*Le Premier Ministre  
Chef du Gouvernement*

*Braxxaville, le* 14 JANV. 1983

cc MASTER  
ops.

Madame le Premier Ministre

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T38183

Il me plait, au seuil de cette nouvelle année 1983, d'adresser à Votre Excellence et à Votre famille Mes vœux de bonheur, de santé et de prospérité et de Vous dire combien J'ai été sensible à l'invitation faite par Votre Gouvernement à Monsieur Pierre NZE, Mon Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Je Vous en remercie très vivement.

Devant le caractère grave et préoccupant de la situation internationale, le souci du Peuple Congolais, de son Parti, de son Gouvernement et de son Chef, le Président Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO, est de resserrer les liens d'amitié avec tous les peuples du monde épris de liberté et de paix.

Le rôle éminent qui est le vôtre, dans le concert des Nations, et l'action que Votre beau pays a toujours menée en faveur de la Coopération Internationale amènent Mon Pays à compter le Royaume-Uni de Grande Bretagne parmi ses amis.

La visite officielle de Monsieur Pierre NZE, comme celle effectuée en septembre 1982 par Monsieur LEKOUNDZOU-ITIHI-OSSETOUMBA, Mon Ministre des Finances, constitue pour nos Deux Pays, l'heureuse occasion pour le raffermissement des rapports bilatéraux.

SON EXCELLENCE MADAME MARGARET THATCHER  
PREMIER MINISTRE DU ROYAUME-UNI  
DE GRANDE-BRETAGNE

LONDRES

Je suis d'avance convaincu que Votre Excellence réservera, à Monsieur Pierre NZE, l'accueil et la compréhension nécessaires à l'accomplissement de sa mission.

Vous remerciant et Vous demandant de bien vouloir ajouter foi et créance à tout ce qu'il Vous dira de Ma part, Je Vous prie d'agréer, Madame le Premier Ministre, les assurances de Ma très haute estime et Mes respectueux hommages.-



*(Handwritten signature in blue ink)*

Colonel Louis SYLVAIN - COMA

Subject

Le Mouton  
9B

cc no H



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

6 January 1983

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T. 1A/83

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 11 December about your Government's plans to use British equipment for the development of the Congo's railways in the framework of the current Five-Year Plan.

We shall look into the questions you raise about financing and a reply on these points will be sent through our Ambassador as soon as possible. Meanwhile, I agree with you that the strengthening of the relations between our two countries during the last year has been encouraging. We are impressed by the success of your Government in speeding up the development of the Congo. British industry would be glad to be associated with this process, and has much experience to offer.

With best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

His Excellency Colonel Louis Sylvain-Goma

Alan  
Kerry  
This is Mrs. Thatcher's - Kerist  
return to me  
AJ 7/1/83



JP

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

6 January 1983

PRIME MINISTER OF THE CONGO REPUBLIC

Thank you for your letter of 4 January. I enclose a letter to the Prime Minister of the Congo which Mrs. Thatcher has signed. I should be grateful if you would arrange for its transmission.

mc

Roger Bone, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

COVERING RESTRICTED



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

4 January, 1983

*Please type the letter  
: indicated on page 2 of  
the attached draft telegram  
A.F.C. 5/1.*

*Dear John,*

Letter from the Prime Minister of the Congo Republic

Timothy Flesher's letter of 29 December enclosed a message to the Prime Minister from the Prime Minister of the Congo Republic.

/ I enclose a self-explanatory draft telegram containing a suggested reply which has been cleared with the Department of Transport and the Department of Trade. If the Prime Minister agrees, we will get this off to Kinshasa as quickly as possible. I should also be grateful if you would let me have the top signed copy of the letter for transmission by bag.

*Yours ever,*

(R B Bone)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street

COVERING RESTRICTED

OUT TELEGRAM

Classification and Caveats <b>RESTRICTED</b>	Precedence/Deskby <b>IMMEDIATE</b>
---	---------------------------------------

1 ZCZC  
 2 GRS  
 3 RESTRICTED  
 4  
 5  
 6 FM FCO  
 7 TO IMMEDIATE KINSHASA  
 8 TELEGRAM NUMBER  
 9  
 10 LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER OF CONGO REPUBLIC  
 11 I. The Secretary of State for Transport received, via the  
 12 Chairman of the British Railways Board, Sir Peter Parker, a  
 13 letter to Mrs Thatcher from the Prime Minister of the Congo  
 14 about British involvement in the Congolese Railways. (The letter  
 15 had apparently been entrusted to Jim Urquhart of British Rail  
 16 who happened to be in Brazzaville at the time.)  
 17 2. The letter, dated 11 December, includes a statement that the  
 18 Congolese Government "confirmed" its intention to entrust to your  
 19 industry the supply, for the first time, of this type of  
 20 equipment to the extent in which the most favourable financial  
 21 conditions may be provided". It adds that it would be  
 22 eminently desirable <sup>for</sup> ~~that~~ the financial conditions of the deal  
 23 <sup>to</sup> ~~should~~ be defined. Copy of letter follows by bag.  
 24 3. Please deliver the following reply to Col Sylvian-Goma  
 25 from Mrs Thatcher as soon as possible:

NNNN ends telegram	BLANK	Catchword  'Dear
File number	Dept WAD	Distribution Minimal WAD TRED PS/Mr Onslow Mr Rifkind Sir J Leahy Mr Evans Mr Thomas  No IO Mr Ford, DOT Mr Bird, Min of Transport
Drafted by (Block capitals) A C D S MacRae		
Telephone number 233 4576		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification and Caveats

RESTRICTED

IMMEDIATE

Page

2

1 'Dear Prime Minister

2 ~~Many thanks~~ <sup>Thank you</sup> for your letter of 11 December about your  
3 government's plans to use British equipment for the  
4 development of the Congo's railways in the framework of the  
5 current Five-Year Plan.

6 ~~I have asked my Ministers concerned to look into the~~ <sup>We shall look</sup>  
7 questions you raise about financing <sup>and</sup> a reply on these points  
8 will be sent <sup>through</sup> our Ambassador as soon as possible. Meanwhile,  
9 ~~may I take this opportunity to echo your remarks about the~~ <sup>I agree with you that the strengthening of the relation</sup>  
10 encouraging way in which relations between our two countries  
11 ~~have been strengthened~~ <sup>has been strong.</sup> during the last year. We are impressed  
12 by the success of your <sup>G</sup> government in speeding up the  
13 development of the Congo. British industry would be glad to  
14 be associated with this process, and has much experience to  
15 offer.

16 With best wishes for the New Year,

17 Yours sincerely'

18  
19 4. Embassy should attach unofficial translation of letter  
20 into French before delivery.

21  
22 PYM

23 NNNN  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34

NNNN ends  
telegram

BLANK

Catchword

P. M. of CONGO SYLVAIN-COMPA <sup>do</sup>



12/11

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

29 December, 1982.

I mentioned to you that we had received the attached note from the Department of Transport enclosing a message from the Prime Minister of the Congo Republic. The initial assessment was that no reply was needed, but I should be grateful for your advice on this point. If a reply is needed I should be grateful for a draft.

A copy of this letter goes to Richard Bird (Department of Transport).

Timothy Flesher

FW

J.E. Holmes, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT  
2 MARSHAM STREET LONDON SW1P 3EB

M. Scholar Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street  
Whitehall

21 December 1982

*Dear Michel,*

British Rail's subsidiary BREL, who manufacture rail rolling stock, are active in seeking export work, and they have been pursuing a possible order in the Congo. There have been signs that they have a good chance of success provided they are not subject to unfair financing competition from other countries. In accordance with agreed rules, we have made it clear that we are ready to consider matching foreign offers if hard evidence can be found as to their nature. At the last meeting in the Congo the BREL representatives were handed the attached letter from the Prime Minister of the Congo Republic, addressed to the Prime Minister. This reiterates their interest in the British offer, but does not take us further in defining the credit terms needed. I understand that the Department of Trade and our Embassy are already actively involved in trying to clarify the position. I suggest therefore that this letter, arriving by this rather unconventional route, does not demand any new action. I am however copying the letter and this one to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of State for Trade so that their Departments can take account of it in their future dealings with the Congolese on these issues.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Richard Bird*

R. BIRD  
Private Secretary

Subject

de Mater  
ops

# République Populaire du Congo

*Travail - Démocratie - Paix*

*Le Premier Ministre  
Chef du Gouvernement*

*Braxxaville, le* 11 DEC. 1982

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL NO. T 236B/82.

Excellence,

Mon Gouvernement apprécie hautement la coopération qu'il entretient avec le ROYAUME UNI et se félicite de l'évolution heureuse et harmonieuse des relations entre Nos deux Pays.

Au moment où Mon Pays met en oeuvre son premier Plan Quinquennal de développement pour la période 1982-1986, traduisant ainsi sa nouvelle politique d'aménagement du territoire national, un immense effort, en matière d'infrastructures et d'équipements de transport, s'impose pour favoriser les échanges et faciliter les déplacements des personnes et des marchandises entre les régions et à l'intérieur de chacune d'elles.

Mon Ministre des Transports et de l'Aviation Civile, par l'intermédiaire de Votre Mission Diplomatique en République Populaire du Congo avec résidence à KINSHASA a fait part, à Votre Gouvernement, en juin dernier, des contacts pris avec certaines industries britanniques, notamment la British Rail Engineering BRE METRO Limited pour l'étude et la fourniture d'un important parc de voitures voyageurs et de wagons marchandises, et la British Steel Corporation pour la fourniture d'un lot de rails et d'attaches type Pandrol.

Mon Gouvernement confirme, par la présente lettre, son intention de confier à Votre industrie la fourniture, pour la première fois, de ce type d'équipement dans la mesure où des conditions de financement des plus favorables pourraient lui être accordées.

SON EXCELLENCE MADAME MARGARET TATCHER

PREMIER MINISTRE DU ROYAUME UNI

.../...

LONDRES

Conformément au protocole d'accord signé à Londres le 21 septembre 1982 par le Dr. GERALD VAUCHAN et Monsieur LEKOUNDZOU ITIHI OSSETOUMBA, Mon Ministre des Finances, Je souhaite que le contrat de fourniture des matériels proposés par la British Rail Engineering BRE METRO Limited et la British Steel soit traité dans le cadre de cette ligne de crédit et puisse bénéficier des bonifications susceptibles d'être accordées à Mon Gouvernement, en ce qui concerne le taux d'intérêt et la durée du prêt grâce au concours de Votre Organisation O.D.A : Overseas Development Administration.

Une mission récente du Ministère des Transports et de l'Aviation Civile a définitivement réglé, à DERBY et à LONDRES, le contenu technique des fournitures envisagées, soit 31 voitures voyageurs et 170 wagons marchandises en ce qui concerne la British Rail Engineering BRE METRO limited, et 120 Km de rails, et 1 lot de matériel de voie du type Pandrol pour la British Steel Corporation. Il serait éminemment souhaitable que les conditions financières soient également précisées.

Je reste convaincu que Vous examinerez la présente requête avec Votre bienveillance accoutumée et Vous prie d'agréer, Excellence, Mes respectueux hommages./-



*(Handwritten signature)*  
Colonel Louis SYLVAIN - GOMA

ROUGH TRANSLATION OF LETTER FROM PRIME MINISTER OF CONGO BRAZZAVILLE  
TO MRS THATCHER

My Government greatly appreciates the existing co-operation with the UK and is happy at the harmonious development of relations between our two countries.

At the moment when my country is putting into effect its first five year development plan for the period 1982-86, giving effect in this way to its new national territorial development policy, a great effort in the area of infrastructure and transport equipment, is necessary to develop commerce and facilitate the movement of people and goods between and within the regions.

My Transport and Civil Aviation Minister, has informed your Government last June, through your Embassy in the Popular Republic of Congo, of contacts made with certain British companies, in particular BREL, about the study and supply of an important quantity of carriages and goods waggon, and with British Steel Corporation for the supply of rails and clips of the Pandrol type.

My Government confirms, by this letter, its intention to entrust to your companies the supply, for the first time, of this type of equipment insofar as the most favourable financial conditions could be provided.

In conformity with the protocol of the agreement signed in London on 21 September 1982 between Dr Vaughan and M. Lekoundzou Ithi Ossetoumba, my Finance Minister, I wish the contract for the supply of the materials offered by BREL and BSC be treated in the context of this credit line and be able to benefit from the concessions capable of being offered to my Government as far as the rate of interest and the duration of the loan are concerned, thanks to the assistance of your organisation the Overseas Development Administration.

A recent mission of the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation definitively settled, in Derby and in London, the technical content of the supplies envisaged, i.e. 31 carriages and 170 freight waggons insofar as BREL are concerned, and 120km of rail and one consignment of Pandrol type equipment as regards BSC. It would be extremely desirable that the financial conditions are made equally precise.

Formal conclusion.



to  
Congo

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

4 October, 1982.

Congolese Prime Minister

Thank you for your letter of 1 October.  
I enclose a message to Colonel Sylvain-Goma,  
signed by the Prime Minister, and should be  
grateful if you would arrange for its despatch.

A. J. COLES

Roger Bone, Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

A

subject

cc Fco



PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T 189/82

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

4 October, 1982.

g master  
ops

Dear Prime Minister,

Please accept my warm thanks for your message of good wishes on the occasion of the recent visit to this country of M. Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou, Minister of Finance. I was unfortunately not able to receive M. Lekoundzou personally since I was abroad at the time; but your letter was passed on to me at once on my return by Mr Onslow (Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs).

I was delighted that M. Lekoundzou was able to accept the invitation to visit our country and understand that he had a series of very fruitful meetings. I trust and believe that this will lead to an expansion of relations to the benefit of our two countries.

Thank you again for your kind message.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely  
Raymond Stanger

His Excellency Colonel Louis Sylvain-Goma,

—

So

RESTRICTED



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 October, 1982

*Minister*

*Apert to send in*

*Type letter pl.*

*10/10*

*Dear John,*

Letter to the Prime Minister from the Congolese Prime Minister

/ I attach a letter (with an unofficial translation) addressed to the Prime Minister from the Congolese Prime Minister. This was presented, in Mrs Thatcher's absence in Japan, to Mr Cranley Onslow by Mr Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou, Congolese Finance Minister, during his recent visit to Britain at our invitation.

The purpose of our invitation to M. Lekoundzou was to improve the prospects for a number of British firms who are taking an increasing interest in the Congolese market. Despite its Marxist rhetoric, the present regime there is increasingly pragmatic in its policies and interested in doing business with the West. It is also a net oil exporter.

/ We recommend that a reply should be sent from the Prime Minister. A draft reply is attached. We suggest that this should be transmitted by HM Ambassador in Kinshasa (who is also accredited to Brazzaville). If you would let me have the signed top copy, I will arrange its early despatch.

*Yours ever*

*Roger Bone*

(R B Bone)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street

RESTRICTED

DRAFT: minute/letter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:  
Prime Minister

Reference

DEPARTMENT: TEL. NO:

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

His Excellency  
 Colonel Louis Sylvain-Goma  
 Prime Minister and Head of Government  
 People's Republic of Congo  
 BRAZZAVILLE

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

[Dear Prime Minister]

CAVEAT.....

Please accept my warm thanks for your message of good wishes on the occasion of the recent visit to this country of M Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou, Minister of Finance. I was unfortunately not able to receive M Lekoundzou personally since I was abroad at the time; but your letter was passed on to me at once on my return by Mr Onslow (Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs).

I was delighted that M Lekoundzou was able to accept the invitation to visit our country and understand that he had a series of very fruitful meetings. I trust and believe that this will <sup>lead to an</sup> ~~prove to be~~ the start of a mutually-  
<sup>to the benefit of our two</sup> ~~beneficial~~ expansion of relations ~~between our~~ countries.

Thank you again for your kind message.

Enclosures—flag(s).....

With best wishes



TRANSLATION

Prime Minister

I am taking advantage of the stay in your beautiful country of the Minister of Finance, M Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou, to convey to you the genuine feeling of pleasure that the Congolese Government and myself feel to see this development and reinforcement of our cooperative relations.

The invitation extended to M Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou to make an official visit to the UK represents an important stage in establishing the new direction to be taken by our mutual cooperation.

I am convinced that this visit will contribute to the strengthening of relations in every field which we both desire for our countries.

M Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou will be able to convey personally the desire and the readiness of the Congolese Government to develop a fruitful and mutually-profitable association with your Government for the benefit and prosperity of our respective peoples.

I am already certain that Your Excellency will receive M Itihi Ossetoumba Lekoundzou with the warmth and understanding necessary to enable him to accomplish his mission.

I thank you and ask you kindly to give credence to and have faith in everything he will say to you on my behalf. I beg you, Prime Minister, to believe in the assurances of my highest consideration.

Colonel Louis Sylvain-Goma

*REPUBLIQUE POPULAIRE DU CONGO*

*Travail -> Démocratie -> Paix*

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. 177AA/82

Brassaville, le 13 SEPT. 1982

*Le Premier Ministre  
Chef du Gouvernement*

Madame le Premier Ministre,

Je profite du séjour, dans Votre beau pays, de Monsieur ITIHI OSSETOUMBA LEKOUNDZOU, Ministre des Finances, pour Vous exprimer les sentiments de réelle satisfaction que le Gouvernement Congolais et moi-même éprouvons de voir nos relations de coopération se développer et se renforcer encore davantage.

L'invitation, faite à Monsieur ITIHI OSSETOUMBA LEKOUNDZOU d'effectuer une visite officielle au Royaume-Uni, constitue, pour nous, une étape importante dans les orientations nouvelles à imprimer à notre coopération.

Je demeure convaincu que cette visite contribuera au raffermissement des liens de tous genres que nous souhaitons pour nos deux pays.

Monsieur ITIHI OSSETOUMBA LEKOUNDZOU saura Vous exprimer, de vive voix, le souci et la disponibilité du Gouvernement Congolais à développer, avec Votre Gouvernement, une coopération fructueuse et profitable à chacune des parties et cela pour le bonheur et la prospérité de nos peuples respectifs.

.../...

Son Excellence Madame MARGARET THATCHER

Premier Ministre

ROYAUME-UNI

- LONDRES -

Je suis d'avance persuadé que Votre Excellence réservera à Monsieur ITIHI OSSETOUMBA LEKOUNDZOU l'accueil et la compréhension nécessaires à l'accomplissement de sa mission.

En Vous remerciant et en Vous demandant de bien vouloir ajouter foi et créance à tout ce qu'il Vous dira de ma part, Je Vous prie de croire, Madame le Premier Ministre, aux assurances de ma haute considération./-

Colonel Louis SYLVAIN-GOMA





IT8.7/2-1993

2009:02

Image  
Access

IT-8 Target

Printed on Kodak Professional Paper

Charge: R090212