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TO IMMEDIATE BOGOTA
TELEGRAM NUMBER 108 OF 25 MAY 1982
INFO UKMIS NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 114/82

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT TURBAY

1. PLEASE DELIVER, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, THE FOLLOWING REPLY FROM THE PRIME MINISTER.

BEGINS:

DEAR MR PRESIDENT,

I WAS MOST GRATEFUL FOR YOUR THOUGHTFUL MESSAGE OF 21 MAY ABOUT THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. WE HAVE BEEN MUCH AWARE IN RECENT WEEKS OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH WHICH YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT HAVE ADOPTED TOWARDS THIS TRAGIC SITUATION.

I AGREE WHOLEHEARTEDLY WITH YOU THAT IT SHOULD BE FOR DEMOCRATIC NATIONS TO SET THE WORLD AN EXAMPLE, BY THE PATIENCE WITH WHICH THEY PURSUE PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS AND BY THEIR RELUCTANCE TO RESORT TO MILITARY FORCE. I AM SURE YOU WILL RECOGNISE THAT IN THE SEVEN WEEKS OF NEGOTIATIONS IN WHICH WE HAVE ENGAGED IN GOOD FAITH SINCE ARGENTINA INVADED BRITISH TERRITORY, WE HAVE SHOWN THE GREATEST PATIENCE, AS WELL AS THE UTMOST OPEN-MINDEDNESS AND FLEXIBILITY CONSISTENT WITH THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER. THESE ARE PRINCIPLES WHICH BRITAIN AND COLOMBIA, AS DEMOCRATIC NATIONS, SHARE.

THE DIFFICULTY THROUGHOUT HAS BEEN ARGENTINA'S REFUSAL TO MATCH OUR CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH. PRESIDENT GALTIERI AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAVE REJECTED EVERY PROPOSAL WHICH HAS BEEN PUT TO THEM WHICH WOULD HAVE LED TO A CEASEFIRE COUPLED WITH A WITHDRAWAL OF ARGENTINE FORCES, AS REQUIRED BY SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502. WE LOOKED CLOSELY AND URGENTLY AT PRESIDENT BELAUNDE'S RECENT PROPOSALS, WHICH YOU MENTION, AND I REMAIN GRATEFUL TO PRESIDENT BELAUNDE FOR HIS CONTINUED CONCERN AND ACTIVE INTEREST.

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THE ESSENTIAL FIRST STAGE MUST HOWEVER BE A FIRM INDICATION THAT ARGENTINA IS READY TO COMPLY WITH SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502, WHICH REQUIRES THE WITHDRAWAL OF ITS FORCES FROM THE ISLANDS. IT IS BECAUSE THERE HAS HITHERTO BEEN NO SIGN THAT ARGENTINA IS WILLING TO TAKE THE STEP THAT WE HAVE BEEN OBLIGED TO INCREASE OUR MILITARY, AS WELL AS OUR DIPLOMATIC AND ECONOMIC, PRESSURE ON ARGENTINA. WE HAVE AT EVERY STAGE IN THIS CONFLICT STATED OUR POSITION WITH CLARITY, AND HAVE CONFINED OURSELVES TO USING THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM OF FORCE NECESSARY TO IMPOSE PRESSURE ON ARGENTINA, TO RESTORE THE RIGHTS OF THE ISLANDERS, AND TO PROTECT OUR OWN FORCES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR RIGHTS OF SELF-DEFENCE UNDER ARTICLE 51 OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER.

I SHARE YOUR OWN ANXIETIES ON THE POSSIBLE EFFECT OF THIS CRISIS ON RELATIONS BETWEEN MY COUNTRY AND THOSE OF LATIN AMERICA. AS YOU KNOW, WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO OUR RELATIONS WITH THE REGION AND OUR CONSISTENT OBJECTIVE HAS BEEN TO FOSTER AND STRENGTHEN THEM. IT IS NO WISH OF OURS THAT THEY SHOULD BE PUT AT RISK. BUT I HOPE THAT YOU CAN AGREE THAT NO COUNTRY SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO SEEK A RESOLUTION OF TERRITORIAL DISPUTES BY FORCE, IF DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS ARE TO BE MAINTAINED. IF AGGRESSION IS NOT FIRMLY RESISTED, THE CONSEQUENCES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WOULD BE GRAVE.

THE POINT AT ISSUE HAS BEEN AND REMAINS ARGENTINE AGGRESSION. NO-ONE REGRETS MORE THAN I DO THAT ARGENTINA HAS SO FAR RESISTED ALL OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. WE HAVE NEVER WANTED TO RESORT TO MILITARY ACTION: BUT ARGENTINE OBDURACY HAS LEFT US NO CHOICE. THE DECISION TO END THE PRESENT CONFLICT RESTS SQUARELY WITH ARGENTINA.

IF YOU, MR PRESIDENT, CAN BRING HOME TO THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT NOT ONLY THE EXTENT OF OUR DETERMINATION TO ACHIEVE A JUST SOLUTION TO THIS CRISIS, BUT ALSO THE IMPERATIVE NEED TO WITHDRAW THEIR FORCES FROM THE FALKLAND ISLANDS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 502, YOU WOULD BE MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO THE PEACE OF SOUTH AMERICA AND OF THE

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WORLD WHICH IT WOULD BE HARD TO EXAGGERATE.
YOURS SINCERELY, MARGARET THATCHER.
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ADDITIONAL DISTN.
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