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SUBJECT.

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

11 March 1981

**PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T 18A/81**

Thank you for your letter of 25 February about the forthcoming Conference on reconstruction and development. Your message arrived most opportunely as I was beginning my talks in Washington.

I promised you last November that we would do all we could to secure a positive outcome for this most important Conference. Since then, we have undertaken an extensive round of lobbying in capitals in many parts of the world, and have raised the subject in London with visiting Ministers from foreign countries. Our aim has been to encourage Governments to be represented at the Conference at a high level and to make generous pledges of assistance. As representatives of your Government will be doing the same, we shall be working together to make the Conference a success.

I am glad that you recognise in your letter that the resources required by Zimbabwe for land and rural development are beyond the capacity of Britain or any other single country to meet. I need not remind you that our own contribution to Zimbabwe's development is not only one of our largest in Africa, but is being made at a time when Britain's economy is in serious difficulties and when we are having to make heavy reductions in all areas of Government expenditure.

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Before I received your letter, we had already decided that we would take the opportunity of my visit to Washington to urge the new Administration to be as generous as possible at this month's Conference. Mr. Haig undertook to consider the question carefully and sympathetically. Like us, the US Government recognise that the Zimbabwean economy has the potential to develop to the benefit not only of the people of Zimbabwe, but also as a contribution to the stability of Southern Africa as a whole.

Lord Soames is, I know, looking forward to leading the British delegation to the Conference, and will certainly do all he can to make it a success.

(sgd) M T

The Honourable Robert Mugabe.