

Prime Minister

To note.

A.S.C. 9.  
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PRIME MINISTER

## ARAB/ISRAEL: UK PARTICIPATION IN THE SINAI MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE AND OBSERVERS

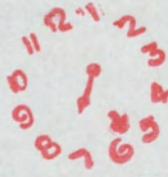
- on point 4*
1. On 28 October the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary minuted to OD on our response to the Americans' request for the participation of a British unit in the Sinai Multi-National Force and Observers (MFO). In Lord Carrington's absence abroad, I wish to let you know the latest position on our contribution. I have cleared the broad lines of this minute with Lord Carrington.
  2. We have agreed with the Ministry of Defence that our contribution should consist of a Headquarters Unit which the Americans were particularly anxious for us to supply. (The MFO said they had no requirement for the Royal Engineers which we originally offered). We are currently negotiating with the MFO on the detailed legal and practical arrangements for our participation.
  3. In October, when it seemed possible that HMG's contribution to the MFO could cost as much as £2 million a year, there was a problem about financing. This has disappeared. The sum now involved is around £600,000 and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have agreed at official level with the Treasury that this expenditure can be met from the savings resulting from economies on UNFICYP. This will be a continuing provision for as long as the UK participates in the MFO.
  4. I should, however, stress that this was a fortuitous saving, and that if it had not occurred we would have continued to press for additional resources. It is most unlikely that we shall be able to deal with future contingencies in this way. As a general rule, therefore, we would not be able to meet sudden contingencies - however desirable a positive response may be on foreign policy grounds - unless we have the additional resources which may be needed.
  5. I am copying this minute to members of OD Committee.

J.A.

8 February 1982



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SECRET