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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 November 1986

*Prime Minister
Agree to this brief
statement on
Dear Charles Afghanistan by the
European Council? CD 25/11*

Afghanistan: Possible European Council Statement

The Foreign Secretary would be grateful for the Prime Minister's endorsement for the concept of a short statement on Afghanistan which might be issued by the European Council. *yes mr*

At the outset of our Presidency we had envisaged that the European Council might issue a statement on Afghanistan at the December meeting. Political Directors have agreed to this in principle and I attach a draft text which, if the Prime Minister agreed, we would propose to circulate by Coreu to partners as soon as possible. The draft does not contain points of substance that would require discussion by Heads of Government and it should be possible to finalise the text by Coreu. If necessary Political Directors could consider it in the margins of the Council meeting before the Foreign Minister's dinner on 5 December. Heads of Government could then take it on the nod.

The statement would come shortly before the seventh anniversary of the Soviet invasion on 27 December and would signal continuing EC concern at a time when the Soviet propaganda and political effort of Afghanistan is increasing - for example with the recent withdrawal exercise - and the resistance are facing greater difficulties on the ground. We should continue to do all we can to maintain international pressure on the Soviet Union to withdraw their troops completely - and soon.

There is normally a joint EC statement on 27 December to mark the anniversary of the Soviet invasion. There would be little point in a further joint statement so soon after the European Council, but effective play could be made of the Council statement in our own national statement(s) and we would urge partners to do likewise.

I would be grateful if you could let me know soon if the Prime Minister is content with the proposal as outlined, so that the text can be put to partners.

John
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(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

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DRAFT EUROPEAN COUNCIL STATEMENT

AFGHANISTAN

- As the seventh year of Soviet occupation comes to a close, Heads of Government again draw attention to the very serious situation facing the people of Afghanistan and neighbouring countries. Over 110,000 Soviet troops remain in Afghanistan to prosecute a bitter and repressive war. Four million Afghans have been forced to flee their country. The Afghan people are still denied their freedom and independence.

- Heads of Government support the United Nations Secretary General's search for a political settlement based on principles overwhelmingly endorsed. They call again on the Soviet Union to end the agony of the Afghan nation by agreeing to a rapid and complete withdrawal of Soviet forces.





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