



10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

22 July 1988

*Dear Jane Judi*

Thank you for your letter of 6 July about the Sharpeville Six.

As you will have read in the press, the defence lawyers have petitioned the South African Acting Chief Justice to grant leave to appeal against the decision of the Supreme Court in Pretoria to turn down the Six's application for their trial to be re-opened. It is also open to the defence lawyers to address a fresh appeal to President Botha for clemency or for the trial to be re-opened. On 12 July, the South African Justice Minister, Mr Coetzee, said that the execution would be suspended to afford the Six the opportunity to pursue an appeal as well as other legal remedies at their disposal.

It is not the Government's normal practice to intervene in cases such as the Sharpeville Six. However, in the particular circumstances of this case we have taken action both bilaterally and with our European partners to urge the South African Government to exercise clemency. I made an appeal for clemency in March when I asked our Ambassador at Cape Town to convey to President Botha my hope that he would see fit to exercise the prerogative of mercy. I joined in the calls for clemency for the Sharpeville Six issued last month at the Toronto Economic Summit and at the meeting of the European Council in Hanover.

As I told the House of Commons on 12 July, if the legal processes at present under way are exhausted without result, we shall repeat our call for clemency for the Sharpeville Six.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

Dame Judi Dench, D.B.E.



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THE PRIME MINISTER

22 July 1988

*Dear Congressman Conyas,*

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*SW*

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Yours sincerely

Raymond Indaba

—

Congressman John Conyers, Jr.