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JD

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

22 December 1982

VISIT BY THE ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL

B/P Mh

Thank you for your letter of 21 December. The Prime Minister would be prepared to see Mr. Klibi from 1700 to 1800 hours on 6 January. But I have since seen Tunis telegram No. 279 which suggests that he would only wish to do this on the understanding that the meeting was held privately, preferably at a weekend and not on official premises. These considerations could well cause considerable difficulty. Before I put the matter to the Prime Minister again, I should be grateful to know whether you wish to offer any further advice.

B/F1

A. J. COLES

John Holmes, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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FM TUNIS 201455Z DECEMBER 82
TO PRIORITY FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 279 OF 20 DECEMBER

FOR NENAD

YOUR TEL NO 110: VISIT BY ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY GENERAL

1. I DISCUSSED THE POSSIBLE VISIT TODAY WITH OMRAN ON HIS RETURN FROM ATHENS. (KLIBI WENT FROM ATHENS TO KHARTOUM AND WILL THEN BE VISITING JEDDA AND DAMASCUS).

2. OMRAN SAID THAT HE HAD FIRST SUGGESTED THE VISIT WITHOUT REFERENCE TO KLIBI, WHO HAD SUBSEQUENTLY APPROVED. THE PRIME MINISTER'S RESPONSE HAD BEEN MUCH APPRECIATED, BUT OMRAN WAS CONCERNED IN CASE THE MESSAGES AS CONVEYED BY DENNIS WALTERS AND OMAR AL HASSAN HAD NOT SUFFICIENTLY STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH KLIBI AND HIMSELF ATTACHED TO THE MEETING BEING STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND UNOFFICIAL. THEIR SUGGESTION WAS THAT IF THE PRIME MINISTER CONSIDERED THAT A MEETING WOULD BE USEFUL AND IF IT COULD BE HELD AWAY FROM OFFICIAL PREMISES, WITH NO PUBLICITY WHATSOEVER AND PREFERABLY AT A WEEKEND (WHICH THEY THOUGHT WOULD REDUCE THE CHANCES OF IT ATTRACTING ATTENTION), THEN KLIBI WOULD GLADLY COME TO LONDON.

3. OMRAN EXPLAINED THAT, IN THEIR OPINION, A MEETING AT THIS STAGE COULD HELP TO CLEAR THE AIR BY LETTING EACH SIDE GIVE A FULL AND FRANK ACCOUNT OF THEIR RESPECTIVE VIEWS. HOWEVER, IT WAS VITAL THAT KLIBI SHOULD NOT ACT - OR APPEAR TO BE ACTING - INDEPENDENTLY OF KING HASSAN. HE COULD NOT MAKE A PUBLIC VISIT TO LONDON, SINCE THIS WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE MISINTERPRETED (IE IT WOULD BE ASSUMED THAT HE WAS NEGOTIATING AND PERHAPS MAKING CONCESSIONS ON THE REINSTATEMENT OF THE FEZ COMMISSION'S VISIT, WHICH HE HAD NO MANDATE TO DO). HENCE THE NEED FOR STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY.

4. OMRAN SAID THAT HE WOULD COME BACK TO ME ABOUT KLIBI'S VISIT AFTER GETTING IN TOUCH WITH KLIBI IN JEDDA OR SEEING HIM IN DAMASCUS, WHERE OMRAN WILL BE ON 23 AND 24 DECEMBER.

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PS/MR HURD

SIR J LEAHY

MR ECERTON

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Prime Minister

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

As you know, you will have other things on your mind on 6 January. London SW1A 2AH

2. Are you nevertheless prepared to see Klibi from 1700 to 1800?

21 December, 1982

A.J.C. ^{21.}/_{12.}

Dear John,

Visit by Arab League Secretary General

Mr Pym has mentioned to the Prime Minister that Mr Chadli Klibi, Secretary General of the Arab League, is interested in paying a private visit to London to talk over current problems. The Arab League Office in London has confirmed Klibi's wish to do this in early January. I understand it might be possible for Mrs Thatcher to allocate up to an hour on 6 January for talks with him.

/ I enclose a draft telegram of instructions to HM Ambassador, Tunis, to suggest this date to Klibi. The telegram touches on other details, including advance publicity, which both sides will wish to be kept to a minimum.

Yours ever

J E Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

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OUT TELEGRAM

Classification and Caveats CONFIDENTIAL	Precedence/Deskby PRIORITY
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GRS
CLASS
CAVEATS
DESKBY
FM FCO
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TEL NO

1	ZCZC
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3	CONFIDENTIAL
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6	FM FCO DECEMBER 1982
7	TO PRIORITY TUNIS
8	TELEGRAM NUMBER
9	INFO ROUTINE MIDDLE EAST POSTS, WASHINGTON, UKMIS NEW YORK
10	OUR TELNO L07 (NOT TO ALL): VISIT BY ARAB LEAGUE SECRETARY
11	GENERAL
12	1. The Arab League Office in London have confirmed to us
13	that Klibi would like to make a private visit to London within
14	the two weeks following Christmas. Please now tell him that
15	the Prime Minister would be delighted to see him on
16	6 January (we anticipate a meeting lasting one hour).
17	2. As Klibi had indicated from the beginning that the visit
18	should be low-key, the programme might be in essence a talk
19	with the Prime Minister in the morning followed by a working
20	lunch with me (no more than three or four on each side). We
21	hope this will fit with Klibi's preferences.
22	3. Klibi will of course understand that the Moroccans must
23	remain our primary channel for exchanges on reinstating the
24	full Arab League delegation's visit. The discussions on
25	6 January should be expected to cover recent developments in


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File number	Dept Private Office	Distribution
Drafted by (Block capitals) JOHN HOLMES		
Telephone number 233 4641		
Authorised for despatch		
Comcen reference	Time of despatch	

OUT TELEGRAM (CONT)

	Classification and Caveats CONFIDENTIAL	PRIORITY	Page 2
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 2 the Middle East generally, as well as touching on Anglo-Arab
 3 relations.
 4 4. We would not (not) propose to make any announcement in
 5 advance. If questions arise about the appointment in the
 6 Prime Minister's and my programmes, No 10 press office and
 7 News Department will mention that the original suggestion came
 8 from Klibi and will deny that the visit is devoted to
 9 negotiating a solution to the delegation problem.
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21 DEC 1982



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