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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 July 1989

Dear Charles,

French Bicentenary: Bilateral with President Mubarak

The Prime Minister will meet President Mubarak at 1540-1610 hrs at the Hotel Crillon on 14 July (we have warned that the Prime Minister may have to leave the Crillon slightly before / 1610). I enclose a personality note.

Arab/Israel

The Egyptians attach great importance to the European role in the peace process and have welcomed the European Council Declaration on the Middle East (copy enclosed). The Prime Minister could:

- encourage Mubarak to use his influence to persuade the PLO to stick to their commitment to eschew terrorism. If the position now adopted by Likud is carried into Israeli government policy, it will be all the more important for the PLO to hold firm to their moderate position. If they abandon it, we shall have no leverage on the Israelis;
- explore Mubarak's ideas on what more can be done to bring Israelis and Palestinians together.

Lebanon

The Prime Minister could make the following points:

- we have assured Prince Saud and the Algerian Foreign Minister in London (29/30 June) that we fully support the work of the Arab League Committee of Three;
- speculation about a Security Council initiative damages Arab League's efforts. Should be avoided.
- we are prepared to use what influence we have with the parties (limited with Asad) to help achieve withdrawal of foreign forces, except UNIFIL, and hope Egypt will do likewise. Egyptian influence could help to discourage further Iraqi meddling.



Regional Issues

Libya: The Prime Minister could ask Mubarak about the development of closer relations between Egypt and Libya, repeating our concern about continued involvement with terrorism and regional destabilisation.

Sudan: Mubarak will be relieved that Sadiq has been ousted. It is still early days for the new regime under Lt General Omer Hassan el-Bashir, which Egypt was the first to recognise, although we welcome reports that he will give priority to ending the civil war (which Mubarak and we believed Sadiq incapable of doing). The Prime Minister might invite Mubarak's assessment of the prospects.

Egyptian Economy

An IMF delegation has been in Cairo for further discussions and the Egyptians hope that an agreement will be signed next month. The Prime Minister might wish to say that we intend to lend strong support if a firm Egyptian programme is put to the IMF board. (But we are unlikely to be able to offer more programme aid, as we did in 1987).

I am copying this letter to Alex Allan (HMT) and Trevor Woolley (Cabinet Office).

Jaw,
Stephe

(J S Wall)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

MUBARAK, MUHAMMAD HUSNI SAYYID

President of the Republic since 14 October 1981.

Born 4 May 1928 at Kafr el-Moseilha, Minufia Governorate, where his father was a minor official. Attended secondary school at Shibin al Kum. 1947 entered Military Academy. 1949 entered Air Academy. Trained as a fighter pilot. 1952-59 Instructor at the Air Academy. 1959 appointed to command an L-28 squadron, and then (1961) a Tupolev TU-16 brigade. 1962 commanded TU-16s in North Yemen. 1964 visited the Soviet Union twice, first for a staff course and then to study the maritime version of the TU-16. 1967 Director General of the Air Academy. June 1969 Chief of Staff of the Air Force. November 1969 promoted Air Vice Marshal; April 1972 appointed Commander-in-Chief. On 6 October 1973, a few hours after the first air strikes of the War, he was promoted Air Marshal and later received the Star of Sinai medal.

In April 1975, Sadat appointed Mubarak Vice-President, a post in which he undertook many diplomatic missions to the USA, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Arab World. He played a prominent part in the creation of the National Democratic Party in 1978 and was elected Secretary General in September 1981. Following Sadat's assassination, the People's Assembly nominated Mubarak as Presidential candidate on 7 October 1981, a choice which was approved by 98.6% of the voters in a referendum on 13 October. He was inaugurated as President the next day. In January 1982 he was elected President of the NDP at a special party congress.

Mubarak was regarded by his Air Force colleagues as a brave and capable pilot and a model officer who owed his promotion to merit rather than connections. All remark on his efficiency and moral integrity. As an instructor at the Air Academy, and subsequently as its Director, he is said to have refused both Nasser's and Sadat's brothers special treatment. Following the expulsion of the Soviet advisers in July 1972, he was thought to be one of the few top Egyptian officers still acceptable to the Russians. He was employed by Sadat in a military fence-mending exercise at the end of that year, visiting Moscow with Prime Minister Sidqi and leading a military delegation. He was also closely involved in the planning of the war of October 1973, in which the Air Force performed satisfactorily in the secondary role allocated to it. He proved an efficient and impressive Air Force Commander.

His sudden elevation to the Vice-Presidency in April 1973 came as a surprise, although with his disciplined approach and administrative efficiency he quickly made the job his own. In addition to his work with the NDP, Mubarak undertook much of the supervision of the daily business of Government. He maintained his interest in military and intelligence matters (seeming to have been personally involved in several major procurement decisions) and, for much of the time, oversaw the running of the Presidency. Mubarak remained until Sadat's death, his loyal but unobtrusive assistant, whom the President frequently entrusted with important missions abroad.

Sadat regarded Mubarak as his natural successor and on occasions hinted that he was in any case contemplating an early transfer of power to his Vice-President. Mubarak expressed reluctance to assume the Presidency but, when it was thrust upon him, he displayed the same quiet competence seen in his earlier career. He shows growing confidence in filling the Presidential role, particularly in his dealings with foreign leaders. However he keeps a lower profile than Sadat and gives formal addresses to the nation on television; he seems to prefer impromptu press conferences and is impatient of diplomatic niceties. One of his favourite ways of meeting people is to pay a "surprise" visit to a factory or an agricultural project, during which individuals air their grievances and the President repeats his call for harder work and greater efficiency.

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In foreign affairs, Mubarak has had some success. He handled the central problem of relations with Israel before the withdrawal from Sinai and after the invasion of Lebanon with caution and skill. His policy of restoring greater balance to Egypt's foreign relations has helped to overcome the difficulty of balancing Egypt's commitment to the Peace Treaty and the US with her desire to return to her place in a generally reluctant Arab world. His courageous support for the King Hussein/Arafat initiative forms part of this. Since becoming President Mubarak has continued to travel extensively abroad. He visited Britain in February 1985, when he was awarded the GCMG, and again briefly in January 1988 on his way to Washington.

Mubarak can also claim some success in moving Egypt towards the fuller democracy for which he has often called. The May 1984 People's Assembly elections were conducted with a much greater degree of fairness than had been expected. He has also given the Egyptian press greater freedom than at any time since the Revolution. As regards the threat to Egyptian democracy posed by the rise of an Islamic fundamentalist opposition outside Parliament, Mubarak has shown himself to be aware of the internal political challenges, and also that the publicity given to the phenomenon by the foreign media may undermine confidence in continued investment in Egypt.

Mubarak has also shown commendable persistence and determination in seeking remedies for Egypt's economic problems, the solution of which he has come to identify as his main priority. In the middle of 1986 he finally recognised that there was no alternative open to Egypt other than to seek agreement with the IMF and reschedule her foreign debts. Although he personally delayed introduction of the reforms required by the IMF, particularly the raising of energy prices, until after the elections for the People's Assembly in April 1987, since then Egypt has launched the programme to restructure her economy and is currently renegotiating her commercial debt through the Paris Club. Mubarak will need all his drive and determination to see this programme through.

Mubarak speaks Russian and English, his command of the latter growing with his confidence. He has no illusions about the Russians and attaches great importance to Egypt's relations with the United States and Western Europe. He likes to be in bed by 10.30 and rises early. He puts in long hours at the office and plays squash regularly.

Suzanne Mubarak, whom he married when she was 17, is the daughter of an Egyptian doctor (who died in 1981) and the former Lilian Palmer, a nurse from Pontypridd who lived in Cardiff until her death in about 1979. Mrs Mubarak, an attractive, lively and intelligent woman, studied sociology at the American University in Cairo in 1972-76 and supports a project for deprived children in the poor suburb of Bulaq. Since her husband became President, she has continued her charitable work and other public activities but without the publicity which surrounded Mrs Sadat. The Mubaraks have two sons (born 1960 and 1962): both read economics at the American University in Cairo, and one worked for a while with two British banks in London but has now returned to Cairo. The second is working for an American bank in Cairo, and seems likely to follow his brother's footsteps by taking a secondment in London.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL MADRID, 26-27 JUNE 1989

Declaration on the Middle East

The European Council has examined the situation in the Middle East conflict in the light of recent events and of contacts undertaken over several months by the Presidency and the Troika with the parties concerned, and it has drawn the following conclusions:

1. The Policy of the Twelve on the Middle East conflict is defined in the Venice Declaration of 13 June 1980 and other subsequent declarations. It consists in upholding the right to security of all States in the region, including Israel, that is to say, to live within secure, recognised and guaranteed frontiers and in upholding justice for all the peoples of the region, which includes recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination with all that this implies.

The Twelve consider that these objectives should be achieved by peaceful means in the framework of an international peace conference under the auspices of the United Nations, as the appropriate forum for the direct negotiations between the parties concerned, with a view to a comprehensive just and lasting settlement.

The European Council is also of the view that the PLO should participate in this process.

It expresses its support for every effort by the permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations to bring the parties closer together, create a climate of confidence between them, and facilitate in this way the convening of the international peace conference.

2. The Community and its Member States have demonstrated their readiness to participate actively in the search for a negotiated solution to the conflict, and to co-operate fully in the economic and social development of the peoples of the region.

The European Council expressed its satisfaction regarding the policy of contacts with all the parties undertaken by the Presidency and the Troika, and has decided to pursue it.

3. The European Council welcomes the support given by the Extraordinary Summit Meeting of the Arab League, held in Casablanca, to the decisions of the Palestinian National Council in Algiers, involving acceptance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which resulted in the recognition of Israel's right to exist, as well as the renunciation of terrorism.

It also welcomes the efforts undertaken by the United States in their contacts with the parties directly concerned and particularly the dialogue entered into with the PLO.

Advantage should be taken of these favourable circumstances to engender a spirit of tolerance and peace with a view to entering resolutely on the path of negotiations.

4. The European Council deplores the continuing deterioration of the situation in the Occupied Territories and the constant increase in the number of dead and wounded and the suffering of the population.

It appeals urgently to the Israeli authorities to put an end to repressive measures, to implement resolutions 605, 607 and 608 of the Security Council and to respect the provisions of the Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilian Populations in Times of War. They appeal in particular for the reopening of educational facilities in the West Bank.

5. On the basis of the positions of principle of the Twelve, the European Council welcomes the proposal for elections in the Occupied Territories as a contribution to the peace process, provided that:

- the elections are set in the context of a process towards a comprehensive, just, and lasting settlement of the conflict.
- the elections take place in the Occupied Territories including East Jerusalem, under adequate guarantee of freedom.
- no solution is excluded and the final negotiations takes place on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 of the Security Council of the United Nations, based on the principle of "land for peace".

6. The European Council launches a solemn appeal to the parties concerned to seize the opportunity to achieve peace. Respect by each of the parties for the legitimate rights of the other should facilitate the normalising of relations between all the countries of the region. The European Council calls upon the Arab countries to establish normal relations of peace and co-operation with Israel and asks that country in turn to recognise the right of the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination.

10 JUL 1969