

159. Letter From Argentine Foreign Minister Costa Méndez to Secretary of State Haig<sup>1</sup>

Washington, April 21, 1982

Dear Al:

Thank you for your letter of April 21st., which gives new hopes on such a difficult and serious matter.<sup>2</sup>

The Argentine government and myself are grateful for your efforts and your concern towards peace.

You are aware that Argentina is willing to continue negotiations.

You should also know that paragraph 8 of the paper which was drafted here,<sup>3</sup> or any other similar provision, whichever its wording may be, should state that it is absolutely essential and *conditio sine qua non* that negotiations will have to conclude with a result by December 31st., 1982. As it has been remarked so many times, this result must include a recognition of the Argentine sovereignty over the Islands. Although said recognition may not be expressly stated in the agreement, nevertheless, the principle and the concept should arise clearly and unequivocally from the wording of the agreement.

We will certainly meet in Washington.

Warm regards,

Nicanor Costa Mendez<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, P820069-0211. Secret; Nodis. Printed from an unofficial translation. In his memoirs, Haig recalled that Costa Méndez had presented him with a message upon his departure from Buenos Aires, April 19, which contained much of the text of this message. (Haig, *Caveat*, p. 289) It is unknown whether Haig was mistakenly referring to the April 21 message in this recollection. Costa Méndez was in Washington to attend the OAS meeting scheduled to begin April 26.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably a mistaken reference to Haig's April 20 message to Costa Méndez, informing him of Pym's acceptance of Haig's offer to come to Washington to discuss the paper developed in Buenos Aires. See footnote 3, Document 154.

<sup>3</sup> See Document 152.

<sup>4</sup> The translation indicates that Costa Méndez signed the original Spanish text.