

238. Telegram From the Department of State to Multiple Diplomatic Posts¹

Washington, May 6, 1982, 2040Z

123449. Subject: Message From Secretary Haig.

1. Secret–Entire text.
2. Please pass the following message to the Foreign Minister from the Secretary.
3. Begin quote

Dear Mr. Minister:

I know you feel, as President Reagan and I do, that the tragic loss of life in the sinking of the Belgrano and Sheffield and other military actions makes it all the more urgent to find a basis for peace in the South Atlantic.

Over the last five days President Belaunde of Peru and I worked out a possible approach, involving these elements:

- (1) Immediate cessation of hostilities concurrent with
- (2) Mutual withdrawal and non-reintroduction of forces;
- (3) Introduction of third parties on to the Falkland Islands to verify withdrawal, administer the Islands, and make sure all elements of the agreement were implemented;
- (4) Acknowledgment by the two governments of differences over the status of the Islands;
- (5) Acknowledgment by the two governments that the aspirations and interests of the inhabitants would have to be included in a final settlement; and
- (6) Negotiation of a definitive solution by 30 April 1983, with the assistance of the third parties.

On May 5, Francis Pym informed me that Britain was prepared to give the most serious consideration to acceptance of this proposal, provided Argentina did so as well, and was prepared to order a cease-fire in the near future if Argentina did accept.²

¹ Source: National Archives, RG 59, Central Foreign Policy File, D850030–0740. Secret; Niact Immediate; Exdis. Sent to all NATO capitals, Canberra, Wellington, and Tokyo. Sent for information Immediate to London. Drafted by Enders and Gompert; cleared by Bremer and in S/S–O; approved by Haig. A similar message from Haig was transmitted in telegram 123533 to all American Republic diplomatic posts, except Managua and USINT Havana, May 6, for delivery to the Foreign Ministers of each country. (Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC Cable File, Falkland File 05/06/1982 (5))

² See Document 227.

These proposals had been discussed at various points with Argentina, receiving an encouraging reaction. But when they were presented by President Belaunde to President Galtieri late May 5, he refused to consider them. Argentina, he said, wants a UN mediation.³

Regrettable as it is that a plan carefully developed with the leadership of a country very supportive of Argentina was not addressed seriously, the effort has not been lost. We understand that Britain will not pull back from the position taken and will make it the basis of his [its] response to the United Nations Secretary General's offer of mediation to reach a peaceful settlement of the war.

From the very beginning of this crisis, the United States has been guided by the principle that force must not be used to seize what cannot be obtained peacefully. The prompt actions of the EC Ten reflected an equally principled stand. The integrity of this norm is of vital practical importance. Historically, its erosion has only led to further disorder and war. Disputes throughout the world could turn violent if the principle of peaceful settlement is undermined. Your insistence on an immediate withdrawal of all forces and a simultaneous ceasefire is crucial in upholding this principle.

Based on our common interest in the rule of law and our common desire to stop this war, we must all strive to assist the parties to achieve a settlement. UN Security Council Resolution 502 continues to provide the basis for such a settlement. My country will actively support efforts to implement this resolution through the Secretary General or any other mechanism. End quote

Haig

³ See Document 232.