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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

10 October 1986

Dear Charles,

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Prime Minister
Agreed that this
group should be
received by the
Foreign Secretary or

South Africa: Visit of NAM Foreign Ministers

Mrs. Chalker?

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As you know, it was decided at the Harare NAM Summit that a group of NAM Foreign Ministers should visit the capitals of South Africa's major trading partners to present the case for comprehensive economic sanctions. The group comprises India, Zimbabwe, Algeria, Argentina, Congo, Nigeria, Yugoslavia and Peru. They wish to visit London, Bonn, Paris, Rome and Tokyo, and to meet a representative of the EC Commission. They met Mr Shultz in New York on 2 October.

The Zimbabwe Mission to the UN have asked UKMis New York to offer a date or dates in October when the group could meet the Prime Minister. On 3 October the Zimbabwean High Commissioner in London made a parallel request for a meeting with the Prime Minister, or, if that were not possible, the Foreign Secretary.

The other European Governments mentioned above and the Japanese have also been approached. Our soundings in New York suggest that they will all agree to meet the group.

/The



The NAM representatives will no doubt convey the standard NAM plea for comprehensive sanctions, urging us to follow the lead of the US Senate. The initiative and its timing are unwelcome. The Foreign Secretary believes, however, that our interests in relation to the NAM and Commonwealth will be best served by agreeing to a meeting. By doing so, we shall be able to give the Ministers a first hand explanation of the arguments against sanctions, which may help to reinforce the more realistic approach among the NAM which began to emerge in Harare. Conversely, if we were to decline the hand of NAM hardliners would be strengthened, and we should be gratuitously exposing ourselves to NAM and Commonwealth criticism over South Africa. We should also be isolated from the US and Federal German Governments on the matter.

As for the level of the meeting, the FRG were at first inclined to offer a meeting with Chancellor Kohl, but (with our encouragement) now expect it to be with Herr Genscher. The Japanese favoured receiving the Group at Foreign Minister level, but, under NAM pressure, have not ruled out a meeting with Prime Minister Nakasone. The French and Italian positions are unclear. President Reagan declined to see the Group and Mr Shultz did so instead. Sir Geoffrey Howe recommends against the Prime Minister's offering to receive them. Their presentation in the meeting with Mr Shultz was apparently poor and there are strong arguments for not giving undue status to the visit. The Foreign Secretary therefore proposes that he should offer to meet them himself.

The Group plan to be in Europe on 14-16 October. Sir Geoffrey does not return from China until 21 October, and will offer a meeting after then. If this proves impossible Mrs Chalker will be available to receive them, on the Foreign Secretary's behalf, on 14 October. Or she will be in Bonn on 15, 16 October, and it may be possible to set up a meeting there.

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The possible presence of Argentina in the Group is a further complication. The Foreign Secretary has concluded that there would be no advantage for us in agreeing that Caputo should be included in the NAM delegation, nor in his visiting London. It is not clear whether the entire Group wishes to visit each capital, or whether they will divide into subgroups. We have already drawn to the Zimbabwean High Commissioner's and Yugoslav Ambassador's attention the fact that we do not have diplomatic relations with Argentina.

We shall aim to ensure that the NAM take the hint and exclude the Argentine from the visit on their own initiative. If they fail to do so, we shall make clear to them that we would not be prepared to receive him.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R N Culshaw'.

(R N Culshaw)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
No 10 Downing St

File

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10 DOWNING STREET
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From the Private Secretary

12 October 1986

SOUTH AFRICA: VISIT OF NAM FOREIGN MINISTERS

Thank you for your letter of 10 October about the visit by a group of NAM Foreign Ministers to present the case for comprehensive economic sanctions against South Africa.

The Prime Minister would not want to see this group and agrees that the Foreign Secretary or Mrs. Chalker should offer to do so; also that we should ensure that the Argentine Foreign Minister does not take part in any visit to the United Kingdom.

C. D. POWELL

R. N. Culshaw, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office