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FOR PRIVATE OFFICE FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY.  
M.H.P.T. : FALKLANDS ISLANDS/ARGENTINA.

1. FOLLOWING IS NON-PAPER.

TEXT STARTS.

1. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WELCOME THE INTEREST SHOWN BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT IN REACHING AGREEMENT ON FISHERIES AND RELATED ISSUES IN THE SOUTH-WEST ATLANTIC. IN THE INTERESTS OF CONSERVATION, AVOIDING INCIDENTS AND EASING TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT BELIEVE THAT SUCH AGREEMENT IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE AND WOULD HELP TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. ON THESE SUBJECTS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ARE READY FOR DIALOGUE AND DESIRE PROGRESS.

2. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ARE NOT PREPARED TO DISCUSS SOVEREIGNTY. THEY REGARD THE PROPOSAL FOR AN AGREED STATEMENT, TO THE EFFECT THAT DISCUSSION WERE WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO QUESTIONS OF SOVEREIGNTY, AS A CONSTRUCTIVE AND WISE PRELIMINARY TO TALKS. THEY FOUND THE TEXT SUGGESTED BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ACCEPTABLE, SUBJECT TO SOME SMALL CHANGES, WHICH THEY WOULD WISH THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ALSO TO ACCEPT. AN ANNOTATED VERSION OF THE ARGENTINE TEXT IS ATTACHED.

3. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ALSO BELIEVE THAT IT IS ESSENTIAL TO MAKE CLEAR AT THE OUTSET THE BASIS ON WHICH THEY APPROACH THE CENTRAL ISSUE, FISHERIES, IN ORDER TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO INTENSIFICATION RATHER THAN RESOLUTION OF THE EXISTING DEADLOCK. ACCORDINGLY, THEY CONSIDER IT APPROPRIATE AT THIS STAGE TO OUTLINE THE CONSIDERATIONS GOVERNING THEIR APPROACH TO AN UNDERSTANDING ON FISHERIES.

4. A) THE SOUTH-WEST ATLANTIC IS A RICH FISHERY AND IN RECENT YEARS HAS BEEN THE OBJECT OF A RAPIDLY INCREASING FISHING EFFORT. WITHOUT ADEQUATE CONSERVATION ARRANGEMENTS THIS VALUABLE AND PERISHABLE RESOURCE WOULD BE EXPOSED TO AN INCREASING THREAT, WITH NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES NOT ONLY FOR THE REGIONAL HABITAT BUT ALSO FOR THOSE CONCERNED WITH THE EXPLOITATION OF THE FISHERY. CONSERVATION MEASURES ALREADY IN FORCE HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN FISHING EFFORT. BUT HOWEVER EFFECTIVE PARTICULAR MEASURES MAY BE, UNLESS THEY ARE DESIGNED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF THE REGION AS A WHOLE, THEY WILL NOT BE FULLY ADEQUATE. THIS UNDERLINES THE NEED FOR THE COORDINATION OF BRITISH AND ARGENTINE CONSERVATION MEASURES. COOPERATION IN THIS AREA WOULD BE IN KEEPING WITH NORMAL INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE.

B) THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT THEREFORE WELCOME THE ARGENTINE PROPOSAL FOR A COORDINATED APPROACH AND WILL BE READY TO CONSIDER MEASURES TO ENSURE THAT THEIR CONSERVATION ARRANGEMENTS ARE COMPLEMENTARY AND THUS SUPPORTIVE OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE REGION AS A WHOLE.

CONCENTRATION OF FISHING VESSELS REPRESENTING VARIOUS FLAG STATES, THERE HAVE BEEN NO INCIDENTS. BUT THE PRESENCE OF A LARGE NUMBER OF FISHING VESSELS FROM A VARIETY OF FLEETS AND THE EXISTENCE OF A SUBSTANTIAL FISHERY IN THE ADJACENT WATERS OF THE HIGH SEAS, TOGETHER WITH THE MOBILITY OF THE STOCKS MEANS THAT THE RISK OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS IS EVER PRESENT, - NOT LEAST FROM OPPORTUNISTIC FISHING BY UNLICENSED FISHERMEN IN WATERS CURRENTLY NOT SUBJECT TO CONTROL. THE BEST SAFEGUARD AGAINST SUCH MISUNDERSTANDINGS WOULD BE SOME AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ON APPROPRIATE PROCEDURES.

D) THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S POSITION IS THAT FISHING IN PATAGONIAN AND FALKLANDS WATERS IS REGULATED BY TWO SEPARATE REGIMES WITH SEPARATE JURISDICTIONAL RIGHTS AND THAT AN EFFECTIVE UNDERSTANDING ON FISHERIES COORDINATION AND AVOIDANCE OF INCIDENTS WOULD NEED TO TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF THEIR DECLARATION OF 29 OCTOBER 1986.

5. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT CONFIRM THAT THEY ARE READY TO PROCEED ON THE ABOVE BASIS. THEY BELIEVE THAT THIS OFFERS THE BEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS TO THE BENEFIT OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS AND OF ANGLO/ARGENTINE RELATIONS, WHICH IT HAS LONG BEEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S AIM TO IMPROVE BY MAKING PROGRESS ON PRACTICAL ISSUES. THEY WOULD BE GRATEFUL TO KNOW IF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT ARE ALSO READY TO PROCEED ON THIS BASIS.  
UNQUOTE.

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