

ARGENTINE PRISONERS

As can be seen from the attached FCO note to Press Officers, the Argentine soldiers captured by our Forces are regarded as prisoners of war under the four Geneva Conventions even though they were not taken as a result of war. We are not at war with Argentina.

In the House this afternoon the Prime Minister answered a Question (text attached) concerning Argentine prisoners of war. In her Answer she stressed that they are not prisoners of war; a state of war does not exist; they are prisoners.

What the Prime Minister said does not in any way contradict the position of prisoners under the Geneva Conventions. The point that the Prime Minister was making was that they were not taken as a result of war.

As the Prime Minister said, they will be returned as soon as possible and their names and state of health will also be made known to their relatives as soon as possible. They will be treated in accordance with, and most likely much better than required by, the Geneva Conventions.

(The above has been cleared with Mike Pattison and has been copied to MoD and FCO Press Offices.)

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