

PRESS GUIDANCE NOTE

SAFETY OF CIVILIANS AT PORT STANLEY

There have been press enquiries about the safety of those civilians remaining in Port Stanley. The following is taken from a note for supplementaries prepared for use by the Secretary of State in Parliament and can be drawn upon as necessary.

1. We are, of course, very conscious of the need to take all possible steps to safeguard the civilians on the Falkland Islands in the current hostilities and our Force Commanders are fully aware of this requirement.
2. So far as those remaining in Port Stanley are concerned, arrangements for their safety can only be made with the co-operation of the Argentine Commander. We have therefore directed our efforts at ensuring that representatives from the International Committee of the Red Cross are conveyed to Port Stanley to make the necessary arrangements with the Argentinians.
3. After some delay, HMC has finally succeeded in transferring to ICRC representatives from the ship UGANDA to the Argentine hospital ship BAHAI BARAISO. Their intention is to travel in this ship to Port Stanley. We trust that this will take place as soon as possible and we are keeping developments under urgent review.
4. If we are asked why it has taken so long to institute these arrangements we can say that the ICRC have been trying to get to the Islands since the early stages of the crisis, but, of course, they have been dependent on Argentine co-operation and it has until now not proved possible to make the necessary arrangements.

SOURCE: C B JENNINGS
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