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ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION

1. King Hussein has told the British Ambassador in Amman that he hopes he may perhaps be able to help us over our difficulties with the Arab League. As you know, the position is still uneasy and potentially damaging. King Hussein's preference is that we should agree to receive a delegation including a member of the PLO, as he wants nothing to complicate further his prospects of persuading the PLO to join him in entering negotiations under the Reagan proposals. He is, however, fully aware that we have a consistent policy on Ministerial contacts with the PLO.
2. His advice should be valuable, but he may prefer to wait for a signal from you that you wish to discuss the subject. If you decide to do so I suggest that a natural way of doing this might be to refer to the death in a car accident last month of General Dlimi, King Hassan's security adviser, and ask King Hussein for his view on how great a blow this was to King Hassan. You could add that we entirely accept that this was a sufficient reason for King Hassan's postponement of the 7 February visit, and hope soon to discuss new dates with the Moroccans.
3. King Hussein may well ask whether it will make any difference to the Government's position if the outcome of the Palestinian National Council in Algiers is a clear signal to Arafat to continue his discussions with the Jordanians about the Reagan plan. You will no doubt wish to point out that we have already told the PLO that I am authorised to meet a PLO official for talks in the Middle East, once the Arab League visit has taken place; and that a further step will need an explicit advance by the PLO on the points of importance to us and already known to them.
4. It would be better not to raise the problem of Ministerial visits to Saudi Arabia with King Hussein since he cannot help us over this. King Hussein's relationship with the Saudis is a delicate one and he will not wish to expand goodwill for our sake. Although it is always an option for King Hassan to leave the matter where it now rests, I believe it more likely that he will return to us for agreement to new dates on the previous basis, ie that it is for him to deal with the composition problem. That will leave us no further forward. It would, however, be useful to have King Hussein's views about one possible outcome: that King Hassan will decide to come whether or not all the other members are in agreement with him (in the hope that, in the event, they will all join him). But our difficulties will

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be eased only if the Saudis decide to come and it would be helpful to know King Hussein's views on the likelihood of this.

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Douglas Hurd