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TELEGRAM NUMBER 22 OF 26 JANUARY

MIPT: RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SPEAKING NOTE.

BEGINS: THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE ASKED THE SWISS PROTECTING POWER TO APPROACH THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA, TO CONSIDER MEANS OF FOLLOWING UP THE EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES ON 10 DECEMBER BETWEEN MRS THATCHER AND PRESIDENT ALFONSIN. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT REPEAT THEIR WELCOME FOR THE RETURN OF DEMOCRACY TO ARGENTINA. THEY BELIEVE THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF TALKS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND ARGENTINA AT OFFICIAL LEVEL ABOUT THE PROGRESSIVE NORMALISATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD NOW BE CONSIDERED. IT WILL BE NECESSARY HOWEVER FOR BOTH SIDES TO RECOGNISE THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION AND THE CONSTRAINTS UNDER WHICH THE OTHER IS OPERATING.

2. WITH THIS IN MIND, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT PROPOSE THAT ANY DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO THE POSITIONS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ARGENTINA RESPECTIVELY ON THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE FALKLAND ISLANDS, AND INDEED, THAT SOVEREIGNTY WOULD NOT BE DISCUSSED.

3. IT IS PROPOSED THAT THE AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION COULD INCLUDE:

- A. THE RECIPROCAL LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS ON TRADE BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ARGENTINA.
- B. THE LIFTING OF ALL OUTSTANDING FINANCIAL RESTRICTIONS.
- C. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE RETURN OF THE ARGENTINE DEAD FROM THE FALKLAND ISLANDS OR, FAILING THAT, FOR A NEXT-OF-KIN VISIT.

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- D. THE RESTORATION OF THE AIR SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.
- E. THE RESUMPTION OF CULTURAL, SCIENTIFIC AND FULL SPORTING CONTACTS.
- F. THE UP-GRADING OF OFFICIAL RELATIONS.
4. THERE HAVE BEEN SUGGESTIONS FOR SECRET TALKS. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT WELCOME SUCH A PROCEDURE, SEEING NO NEED TO CLOAK IN SECRECY MEETINGS ABOUT THE NORMALISATION OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. MOREOVER, THERE WOULD BE SERIOUS DANGERS OF MISUNDERSTANDING IF THERE WERE TO BE CLANDESTINE DISCUSSIONS, AND WORD OF THESE WERE TO LEAK.
5. REGARDING PRESENTATION, SIR GEOFFREY HOWE HAS SAID PUBLICLY THAT BOTH SIDES ARE DEVELOPING A WILL TO BEGIN TAKING STEPS TOWARDS RESTORING A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP. IF BRITISH SPOKESMEN ARE ASKED ABOUT THE PRESENT SWISS APPROACH TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA, THEY PROPOSE TO CONFIRM IN GENERAL TERMS THAT MEANS OF CARRYING THIS PROCESS FORWARD ARE BEING EXPLORED. BUT THE SWISS AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS HAVE NO INTENTION OF STIMULATING PUBLICITY AT THIS EARLY STAGE. THE PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF TALKS BETWEEN BRITISH AND ARGENTINE OFFICIALS CAN BE DISCUSSED ONCE TERMS OF REFERENCE HAVE BEEN AGREED.
6. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT LOOK FORWARD TO KNOWING THE VIEWS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ARGENTINA ON THESE SUGGESTIONS. THEY CONSIDER IT MOST IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW UP THE EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES THROUGH EXCHANGES IN AREAS ON WHICH IT IS REALISTIC TO EXPECT EARLY PROGRESS. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HOPE THAT THIS CAN LEAD TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RENEWED CLIMATE OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE IN WHICH OUR RELATIONS CAN BE MANAGED IN A PRACTICAL AND PRODUCTIVE WAY. ENDS.

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