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DESKBY 312130Z UKMIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON, PORT STANLEY, BUENOS AIRES

FM FOO 312030Z MARCH 82

TO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK

TELEGRAM NUMBER 179 OF 31 MARCH

INFO IMMEDIATE BUENOS AIRES, WASHINGTON AND PORT STANLEY (PERSONAL FOR GOVERNOR)

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK, CINC FLEET, AND F OF F 1(EMBARKEED)

TELECOM GOULDING/FEARN: SOUTH GEORGIA: ARGENTINE ACTION IN UN

1. WE UNDERSTAND FROM YOU THAT ARGENTINE INTENTION MAY NOT NOW BE TO SEEK AN EMERGENCY DEBATE IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL BUT TO PUT ROUND AN INFORMATIVE NOTE TO SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS GIVING THEIR VERSION OF EVENTS IN SOUTH GEORGIA AND DRAWING ATTENTION TO REPORTS OF BRITISH NAVAL MOVEMENTS.

2. WE AGREE THAT, IF THE ARGENTINES TAKE THIS ACTION, YOU SHOULD ALSO CIRCULATE A NOTE. FOR THIS YOU MAY DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING.

3. HISTORY OF EVENTS. YOU SHOULD DRAW ON MY TELNO 44 TO BRASILIA FOR SUMMARY OF EVENTS UNTIL 25 MARCH. ON 25 MARCH AN ARGENTINE NAVAL TRANSPORT VESSEL ARRIVED AT LEITH HARBOUR TO DELIVER FURTHER SUPPLIES TO THE MEN ASHORE. OUR AMBASSADOR IN BUENOS AIRES SOUGHT AN EARLY RESPONSE FROM THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO OUR PREVIOUS REQUESTS THAT THEY SHOULD ARRANGE FOR THE MEN'S DEPARTURE. THIS REQUEST REFUSED. OUR AMBASSADOR MAKES CLEAR TO THE ARGENTINES THAT WE WISHED TO DO EVERYTHING WE COULD TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AND PROPOSED THAT IF THE PARTY REQUEST THE PROPER AUTHORISATION FROM THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES AT GRITVIKEN THIS WOULD BE GIVEN. NO IMMEDIATE REPLY FROM

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ARGENTINES BUT ON 26 MARCH THEY ISSUE A PRESS STATEMENT ANNOUNCING THAT THE ARGENTINE PARTY WILL BE GIVEN ALL NECESSARY PROTECTION BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. ARGENTINE PRESS REPORTS THAT ARGENTINE NAVAL VESSELS HAVE BEEN ORDERED INTO THE AREA. ON 28 MARCH, ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER SENDS MESSAGE TO SECRETARY OF STATE REJECTING PROPOSAL TO REGULARISE PRESENCE IN SOUTH GEORGIA BUT PRESSING FOR DISCUSSION NOT ONLY OF THIS ISSUE BUT ALSO OF WIDER SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE. ON 30 MARCH, PARLIAMENTARY STATEMENTS IN BOTH HOUSES (TEXT AVAILABLE TO YOU IN VERBATIM) MAKING CLEAR THAT WE HAD NO WISH TO INTERFERE WITH A STRAIGHT-FORWARD CONTRACT BUT THAT WE COULD NOT ACCEPT AN ILLEGAL UNAUTHORISED PRESENCE ON BRITISH TERRITORY. THE STATEMENT EMPHASISED OUR WISH TO DEFUSE THE ISSUE AND TO PURSUE A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION TO IT. ON 31 MARCH WE ASKED OUR AMBASSADOR IN BUENOS AIRES TO PROPOSE TO ARGENTINE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT A SENIOR FCO OFFICIAL VISIT BUENOS AIRES TO DISCUSS A DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION, ADDING THAT THE DEFUSING OF THIS INCIDENT WOULD HELP PREPARE THE WAY FOR A RESUMPTION OF A DIALOGUE ON THE BROADER SOVEREIGNTY DISPUTE.

4. ON HMS ENDURANCE'S ROLE, YOU SHOULD MAKE CLEAR THAT HMS ENDURANCE HAS PLAYED NO ACTIVE PART. IF ARGENTINE NOTE CLAIMS THAT WE THREATENED TO USE HMS ENDURANCE TO REMOVE THE MEN BY FORCE, YOU SHOULD BRING OUT THAT ANY SUCH ACTION WAS SEEN ONLY AS A LAST RESORT IF THE ARGENTINES FAILED THEMSELVES TO ARRANGE FOR THE MEN'S DEPARTURE OR TO REGULARISE THEIR POSITION. NO SUCH ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN: NOR HAS HMS ENDURANCE APPROACHED THE ARGENTINE PARTY AT LEITH. IT HAS BEEN STANDING BY SINCE 24 MARCH AWAY FROM LEITH HARBOUR.

5. SOVEREIGNTY POSITION ON SOUTH GEORGIA. SOUTH GEORGIA DISCOVERED BY CAPTAIN COOK IN 1775 AND CLAIMED FOR HMG. A BRITISH GOVERNMENT STATION ON SOUTH GEORGIA HAS EXISTED SINCE 1909 AND AT PRESENT A BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY BASE PROVIDES ALL-THE-YEAR-ROUND BRITISH PRESENCE. ARGENTINE CLAIM DATES FROM 1927 AND IS PRESUMABLY BASED ON PROXIMITY (SIC) TO ARGENTINE MAINLAND.

6. IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR SOUTH GEORGIA. THE SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY BASE AT GRAYVICKEN HAS

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AUTHORITY, FROM THE GOVERNOR OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES, TO AUTHORISE IMMIGRATION INTO SOUTH GEORGIA. THE POINT OF ENTRY FOR IMMIGRATION PURPOSES IS GRYTVIKEN. NORMAL PROCEDURES APPLY THROUGH PRESENTATION OF PERSONAL DOCUMENTATION. NO VISAS ARE REQUIRED.

7. THE ARGENTINES HAVE ASSERTED THAT ENTRY INTO SOUTH GEORGIA FOR ARGENTINES IS REGULATED BY THE 1971 UK/ARGENTINA COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT. THIS PROVIDES INTER ALIA FOR ARGENTINES AND FALKLAND ISLANDERS TO TRAVEL TO AND FROM THE ISLANDS USING A DOCUMENT KNOWN AS A WHITE CARD INSTEAD OF A PASSPORT. HOWEVER, COMMUNICATIONS AGREEMENT APPLIES ONLY TO THE FALKLAND ISLANDS WHERE IN ANY CASE HOLDERS OF WHITE CARDS HAVE TO OBSERVE NORMAL IMMIGRATION PROCEDURES.

8. MOVEMENT OF UK WARSHIPS. THE ONLY RN VESSEL IN THE AREA IS HMS ENDURANCE, WHICH IS A LIGHTLY-ARMED ICE-PATROL VESSEL. ITS FUNCTION IS TO PROVIDE AN OFFICIAL BRITISH NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AND BRITISH ANTARCTIC TERRITORY, TO CARRY OUT SCIENTIFIC WORK AND TO SUPPLY AND ROTATE PERSONNEL AT BRITISH ANTARCTIC STATIONS. IT REMAINS IN THE AREA FOR ABOUT FIVE MONTHS IN EACH YEAR.

9. IF ARGENTINE NOTE REFERS TO REPORTED DEPLOYMENT OF BRITISH SUBMARINES, YOU SHOULD STRESS THAT, APART FROM HMS ENDURANCE, THE ONLY OTHER NAVAL VESSELS IN THE AREA APPEAR TO BE NUMEROUS ELEMENTS OF THE ARGENTINE NAVY. (PRESS REPORTS ARE THAT THESE INCLUDE CORVETTES, DESTROYERS AND AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER).

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