



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

13 May, 1983

Dear John,

Postponement of President Machel's Visit

In your letter of 10 May you authorised a message from the Prime Minister about the postponement of President Machel's visit. HM Ambassador in Maputo has now passed this to the Mozambican authorities, although he was unable to see President Machel personally owing to the President's illness.

The Mozambicans have reacted sensibly. However the Ambassador has recommended that a signed message from the Prime Minister should be sent if possible. This would help to alleviate any personal disappointment on the President's part at the postponement of his long-planned visit.

More important, perhaps, the delivery of a personal letter from the Prime Minister would enable the Ambassador to gain a personal audience with the President which might not otherwise be possible. This would allow him to raise a worrying consular case, that of Mr Dion Hamilton, with President Machel in person. Access to the President about this case has proved difficult in the past, and we consider it highly desirable that the Ambassador should have an early opportunity to discuss it with him. I enclose a copy of a recent telegram from Maputo which sets out some of the background.

I enclose the text of the message which was sent telegraphically. A signed version of this, perhaps with a manuscript addition along the lines suggested, would serve the purpose admirably.

Yours ever

(J E Holmes)  
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq  
Private Secretary  
10 Downing Street

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FM MAPUTO 101000Z MAY 83  
TO PRIORITY F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 186 OF 10 MAY

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DION HAMILTON.

1. CONSUL VISITED BEIRA YESTERDAY IN THE HOPE OF SEEING HAMILTON BEFORE MY DEPARTURE FOR LONDON TOMORROW. SHE WASNABLE TO SPEAK THERE TO RESIDENT MINISTER GUEBUZA WHO INFORMED HER THAT THE MATTER WAS NOW OUT OF HIS HANDS AND THAT SHE WOULD BE ADVISED TO RETURN TO MAPUTO TO AWAIT DEVELOPMENTS. WE WERE TOLD ON HER RETURN YESTERDAY THAT HAMILTON WAS IN MAPUTO AND THAT A CONSULAR VISIT HAD BEEN ARRANGED AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE FOR THIS MORNING CONSUL REPORTED THERE THIS MORNING TOGETHER WITH SR NAVESSE, DIRECTOR OF CONSULAR AFFAIRS AT THE M F A. BOTH WENT WITH A CAPTAIN CANIVETE OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE TO MACHAVA PRISON WHERE THEY WERE MET BY A LARGE RECEPTION COMMITTEE OF UNIFORMED SOLDIERS INCLUDING A PHOTOGRAPHER. CONSUL OBJECTED STRONGLY TO THE PHOTOGRAPHY, WHICH NEVERTHELESS PERSISTED UNTIL HAMILTON WAS BROUGHT IN. CAPTAIN CANIVETE AND A COLLEAGUE REMAINED THROUGHOUT THE THIRTY MINUTE INTERVIEW, WHICH WAS IN PORTUGUESE.

2. HAMILTON'S APPEARANCE AND MORALE HAD DETERIORATED BADLY. HE WAS REASONABLY WELL DRESSED, WITH A NEW, GREY, BEARD, HOWEVER HE LOOKED THIN AND ILL, WITH RED EYES THAT APPARENTLY HAD DIFFICULTY IN FOCUSING. HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN A MILITARY ANTONOV TO MAPUTO ON 3 APRIL. HE HAD BEEN BLINDFOLDED, AND THIS CONTINUED FOR FOUR DAYS AFTER HIS ARRIVAL. SINCE THAT TIME HE HAD BEEN IN HANDCUFFS 24 HOURS A DAY, IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT IN A SMALL CELL IN BLOCK 8. WHEN THE BLINDFOLD WAS FIRST REMOVED, AND OCCASIONALLY SINCE HE HAD HAD PROBLEMS WITH DOUBLE VISION. HE BELIEVED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE BLINDFOLDING AND ISOLATION HAD BEEN TO DISORIENTATE HIM. HE SAID THAT HE WAS FEELING VERY LOW, AND AT SEVERAL POINTS DURING THE INTERVIEW WAS ON THE VERGE OF TEARS. HE HAD ASKED FOR A MEETING WITH THE EMBASSY ONLY LAST WEEK, WHEN HE BEGAN TO SUSPECT THAT WE HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED OF HIS WHEREABOUTS.

3. HAMILTON HAS RECEIVED NO SUPPLEMENTARY FOOD FROM OUTSIDE SINCE HIS TRANSFER FROM BEIRA, SINCE WHEN HE HAS ALSO NOT SEEN HIS GLASSES, RAZOR AND TOILETRIES. HE BELIEVES THAT SOME OF THESE ITEMS HAVE NOW ARRIVED AT MACHAVA AND ASKED THE CAPTAIN PRESIDING IF HE COULD SEE WHAT HAD BEEN BROUGHT FOR HIM. HE NEEDS SOAP, CIGARETTES, MATCHES

VITAMINS, FRUIT AND VEGETABLES. THE FOOD PROVIDED IS BETTER THAN IN BEIRA BUT IT IS INSUFFICIENT. HE OFTEN GOES WITHOUT BREAKFAST. HIS OTHER MAIN WORRY, APART FROM THE HANDCUFFS, WAS THE RISK OF MALARIA, AS THE NETTING ON HIS CELL WINDOW IS TORN AND HE IS BADLY BOTHERED BY MOZQUITOES. HE ASKED IF WE COULD SUPPLY MALOPRIM. HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT HIS FAMILY ESPECIALLY MIZE, AND WISHED TO BE REASSURED THAT THEY WERE ALL WELL.

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4. HAMILTON THEN WENT ON TO SPEAK ABOUT HIS CASE. HE HAD PREPARED A 32-PAGE DOCUMENT OUTLINING HIS DEFENCE, AND IN PARTICULAR ANSWERING THE POINTS MADE AT THE TRIAL AFTER HE SPOKE, WHICH HE HAD NO OPPORTUNITY TO ANSWER. HE SAID THAT, FOLLOWING HIS BAD CAR ACCIDENT 3 AND A HALF YEARS AGO, THERE WERE PARTS OF HIS MEMORY WHICH HAD BEEN WIPED OUT. FOR EXAMPLE, HE HAD NOT SEEN THE ARMS ALLEGEDLY DISCOVERED IN HIS HOUSE FOR OVER 4 YEARS. HE CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD HAD ONLY A BRIEF MEETING WITH HIS DEFENCE COUNSEL ON THE DAY OF THE TRIAL AND THAT HE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO GIVE A FULL ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF. WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE AUTHORITIES, HE HAD HANDED THE DOCUMENT TO A FRIEND WHO HAD VISITED HIM IN PRISON IN BEIRA QUOTE A FEW DAYS UNQUOTE BEFORE HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO MAPUTO (THIS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN (NEXT WORD UNDERLINED) AFTER THE VICE CONSUL'S VISIT ON 28 MARCH), FOR IMMEDIATE TRANSMISSION TO THE EMBASSY. CONSUL INFORMED HAMILTON THAT WE HAD NEVER RECEIVED SUCH A DOCUMENT. HAMILTON WAS ANXIOUS TO KNOW OF THE PROGRESS OF HIS CASE AND OF THE FATE OF HIS APPEAL. CONSUL EXPLAINED THAT THE AUTHORITIES OF BOTH COUNTRIES WERE IN CLOSE TOUCH IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT, AND THAT THE QUESTION OF HIS CASE WOULD DOUBTLESS BE RAISED BY JOURNALISTS AND OTHERS DURING THE VISIT. SHE EXPLAINED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MOZAMBICANS IN ATTENDANCE THAT A FULL REPORT FROM HERE ON HIS CONDITION WAS VITAL IN THE LIGHT OF THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO BRITAIN NEXT MONDAY. SHE THEN HANDED OVER TO CAPT CANIVETE THE LETTERS FROM HAMILTON'S MOTHER, BROTHER AND SON WHICH WE HAVE BEEN HOLDING. HE PROMISED THAT THESE WOULD BE FORWARDED, OR RETURNED TO ME, AS SOON AS THEY HAD BEEN READ. HAMILTON ASKED FOR PAPER AND PEN FOR HIMSELF.

5. AFTER HALF AN HOUR'S TALK AND SOME IMPROVEMENT IN HAMILTON'S SPIRITS CONSUL WAS ASKED TO LEAVE. HAMILTON PRESSED A HANDKERCHIEF, APPARENTLY CONCEALING A NOTE, INTO HER HAND IN FULL VIEW OF THE MILITARY, WHO PREDICTABLY ASKED FOR IT BACK AS SOON AS CONSUL LEFT THE ROOM. THE ATMOSPHERE SURROUNDING THE MEETING, AND, ONE IMAGINES, HAMILTON'S DETENTION AND TREATMENT IN MACHAVA WAS ALTOGETHER HARDER AND MORE PROFESSIONAL THAN WHEN HE WAS BEING HELD BY S N A S P IN BEIRA. THE APPARENTLY GENUINE IGNORANCE DISPLAYED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WHO WORKED HARD TO ARRANGE CONSUL'S POINTLESS VISIT TO BEIRA, AND THE OBVIOUS AUTHORITY OF CAPTAIN CANIVETE IN THE MATTER OF PHOTOGRAPHS, ETC., INDICATED STRONGLY THAT THE MILITARY AND NOT THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES NOW HOLD SWAY OVER HAMILTON. WE CANNOT DEAL WITH THEM EXCEPT THROUGH THE M F A. THEIR METHODS AND PROCEDURES ARE A MYSTERY, BUT WHAT WE DO HEAR OF THEM IS OMINOUS.

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6. CONSUL AGREED THAT , ON THE PRACTICAL QUESTIONS SUCH AS FOOD AND MEDICINES, WE WOULD SEND A NOTE TODAY TO THE M F A DETAILING OUR REQUEST TO SUPPLY HAMILTON ON A REGULAR BASIS. CONSUL ALSO WARNED THAT WE WOULD PROTEST OVER THE HANCUFFS, SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AND FAILURE TO INFORM US OF HIS WHEREABOUTS.

7. I HAVE JUST SEEN F C O TELEGRAM NUMBER 131. I AM PESSAMISTIC ABOUT THE POSSIBLE EFFECT OF THIS ANNOUNCEMENT ON HAMILTON'S CASE AND WILL SEND YOU MY CONSIDERED RESPONSE ABOUT WHAT WE SHOULD DO NEXT ONCE I HAVE BROKEN THE NEWS TO THE PRESIDENT.

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