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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

23 June 1987

From the Private Secretary

SOUTH AFRICA: REPLY TO PRESIDENT BOTHA'S LETTER

Thank you for your letter of 22 June, enclosing a draft reply to President Botha's letter of 25 May to the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister has asked for the reply to be amended to make it less confrontational in tone. I enclose the version which she has signed. Provided the Foreign Secretary is content, I should be grateful if it could be despatched.

C. D. POWELL

R. N. Culshaw, Esq., MVO.
Foreign and Commonwealth Office



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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

24 June 1987

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T124187

Dear Mr. President.

Thank you for your letter of 25 May about discussion of South Africa at the Venice Summit.

I welcome your intention, expressed in your letter, to continue with economic, social and constitutional reform, as well as your plan to become more personally involved in negotiations with black leaders.

Although there was no detailed discussion of South Africa among Heads of Government at Venice, our views were fairly summarised by Signor Fanfani at his closing press conference:

"As regards Africa - a continent with enormous potentialities but facing extremely serious economic, social and political problems - we viewed the situation in South Africa with particular concern. We agreed that a peaceful and lasting solution can only be found to the present crisis if the apartheid regime is dismantled and replaced by a new form of democratic, non-racial government. There is an urgent need, therefore, to begin a genuine dialogue with the representatives of all the components of the South African society. At the same time we noted the importance of humanitarian assistance initiatives for the victims of apartheid and

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of supporting the efforts by SADCC (Southern African Development Coordination Conference) member states to develop and strengthen their own economies."

I believe that the formula of matching, reciprocal commitments (devised by the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group) continues to offer a good basis for progress. I very much hope that you will find a way to break the current impasse: I feel sure that the key steps are those proposed by the international community.

In your message after the General Election result you mentioned my opposition to violence as a means of pursuing political ends. Certainly, I remain convinced that a commitment by all sides to call a halt to violence is a vital component of successful negotiations in South Africa.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Kitcher

The Honourable P. W. Botha, DMS., MP.