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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

14 July 1988

Dear Charles,

South Africa

Thank you for your letter of 13 July about your telephone conversation with Teltschik.

We shall send you advice on the idea of an emissary once we have Mr Renwick's views. He has been in Natal for the past couple of days and returns to Pretoria tomorrow.

/ The Foreign Secretary already had in mind to issue a statement on the occasion of Mr Mandela's 70th birthday. I enclose the text. It could equally well be issued in the Prime Minister's name (in which case the need for an FCO statement would lapse). Indeed, Sir Geoffrey Howe would see advantage in this. He takes your point that serious representations are best made in private. However, the issue of Mr Mandela's release is now well and truly in the public domain; and, as you yourself point out, the Prime Minister has already made several public references to our belief that the South African Government ought to release Mr Mandela. However, so far as we can trace, recent public references by the Prime Minister have taken the form of replies to letters from Members of Parliament rather than public statements of the kind proposed by Herr Kohl.

The Prime Minister will wish to know that the State Department will be recommending to the White House that President Reagan should issue a statement on Mr Mandela's birthday.

You will note that the enclosed draft statement does not specifically address Herr Kohl's call for negotiations between the South African Government, Mr Mandela, Chief Buthelezi and others. In the Foreign Secretary's view, such wording is undesirably prescriptive. But the idea is implicit in the reference to "dialogue across the racial divide on South Africa's future".

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On timing, there would be some advantage in falling in with the German preference for a statement to be issued on Friday for Saturday's press. In particular there is to be a Nelson Mandela Freedom Rally in Hyde Park on the afternoon of Sunday, 17 July, at which Archbishop Tutu is to be the main speaker. Other speakers include Sir Richard Attenborough, Archbishop Huddleston and a representative of the ANC, and there is to be a video message from Mrs Winnie Mandela. It might be better for a statement by the Prime Minister to precede rather than follow Archbishop Tutu.

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long ever*

*L Parker*

(L Parker)  
Private Secretary

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DRAFT STATEMENT TO BE ISSUED IN THE SECRETARY OF  
STATE'S NAME ON THE OCCASION OF MR NELSON MANDELA'S  
70TH BIRTHDAY ON 18 JULY 1988

Mr Nelson Mandela has now spent 26 years in prison.  
The British Government have long called for his  
immediate and unconditional release, and indeed the  
release of all political prisoners. On the occasion  
of Mr Mandela's 70th birthday, we renew that call. (i)



The release of Mr Mandela is crucial to the prospects  
for peaceful change within South Africa. It would be  
an important gesture of reconciliation by the South  
African Government and would help to create a climate  
of confidence in which dialogue across the racial  
divide on South Africa's future would become  
possible in the context of a suspension of violence  
on all sides.