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LETTER DATED 21 DECEMBER 1978 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to address myself to you for the purpose of keeping the Security Council informed of the development of the situation of tension in the southern part of the American continent to which I referred in my letter circulated on 15 December 1978 in document S/12970.

As I noted in that letter, the Argentine Government has made many efforts to solve through negotiations the dispute between it and the Chilean Government concerning the definitive delimitation of the jurisdiction of each country in the southern part of the continent. While these efforts were being made, the Republic of Chile carried out a series of illegal acts which change the status quo of the area whose delimitation is still to be determined and which upset the balance of security in the part of the continent that is in dispute.

My Government has expressly instructed me to draw to the attention of the Security Council some of these illegal Chilean measures which, because of their military character, constitute a renewed threat to international peace and security. I refer specifically to the stationing of Chilean military detachments equipped with artillery on some of the following islands: Freycinet, Herschel, Wollaston, Hornos, Deceit, Picton, Lennox and Nueva. The establishment of these military detachments and their continuous reinforcement with troops and equipment which has been taking place recently create a military imbalance in the area in dispute which the Argentine Government has not failed to notice and which should be a cause of concern to the international community.

These measures taken by the Chilean Government are entirely illegal and give rise to the presumption that it intends to create de facto situations which will be detrimental to the progress of the direct negotiations and will prejudice their results. I also deem it essential to stress that if the Argentine Republic has refrained from taking similar measures it is because of its respect for the process of negotiation which has been under way.

The Argentine Government remains willing to continue the bilateral efforts aimed at making it possible, under mutually acceptable conditions, for the mediator proposed by Argentina and accepted by Chile to begin his tasks.

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Nevertheless, it feels that it has the duty to make fully known to the Security Council the circumstances of the case, entirely in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

I request that this letter should be circulated urgently as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Enrique J. ROS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
