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LETTER DATED 26 JANUARY 1978 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE UNITED
NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour, on instructions from Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, to communicate to Your Excellency a statement made yesterday in the House of Commons announcing that further talks, pursuant to the proposals contained in the annex to my letters of 1 September and 8 September 1977 (S/12393 and S/12395), will be held in Malta beginning on 30 January. I also enclose the texts of some of the replies to supplementary questions put to the Secretary of State.

I have the honour to request Your Excellency to cause this letter with its enclosures to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ivor RICHARD

Annex

The Government, with the full support of the United States Government, are continuing to work for a Rhodesian settlement which will be acceptable to the international community and contribute to peace and prosperity in an independent Zimbabwe.

I shall be meeting Mr. Nkomo and Mr. Mugabe, the joint leaders of the Patriotic Front, in Malta on 30 January. I shall be accompanied by Lord Carver and by Ambassador Andrew Young and the United Nations Secretary-General will be represented by General Prem Chand. The objective of the talks is to discuss with the leaders of the Patriotic Front the whole range of questions arising from the Anglo-American proposals, particularly the substantive matters on which we have so far had very little discussion with them.

/In answer to a question Dr. Owen added:/

The Hon Member must accept that an internal settlement which excludes one of the leading nationalists groups cannot bring about a ceasefire during the elections or bring peace and stability to a newly independent Zimbabwe, nor would it eliminate the threat to international peace and security. It would, therefore, be most unlikely to be recognized by the Security Council. We are signatories to many Security Council resolutions.

Mr. Flannery: Does my Right Hon Friend accept that no solution to the Rhodesian problem is possible that does not take into account the aspirations of the Patriotic Front?

Dr. Owen: I agree with my Hon Friend. We shall not achieve a settlement if we allow any side to have an absolute veto. If we are to achieve a negotiated ceasefire - which is very difficult - no side can hold to its principles to the exclusion of its readiness to compromise. The problem is that there are a number of parties to the dispute who are unwilling to show the necessary compromise.

/In answer to a further question Dr. Owen said:/

The Government and this House alone can confer legal independence on Rhodesia. We would not do so if a settlement did not accord with the basic principles in the Anglo-American proposals.
