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LETTER DATED 23 MAY 1982 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

Further to my letter of 20 May (S/15098) I have the honour to address you on the subject of the Falkland Islands.

The following is a factual account prepared by the United Kingdom authorities of military operations in the area of the Falkland Islands since 19 May. Although some details are as yet incomplete, the information provided accurately reflects reports from British forces in the area.

20 May 1982

To increase pressure on the Argentine garrison, Argentine military installations on the Falkland Islands were bombarded by naval gunfire and United Kingdom ground attack Harriers flew sorties against military land targets, including Fox Bay on West Falkland.

21 May 1982

With the objective of destroying Argentine military installations, including fuel and ammunition dumps and military stores, a number of marine and army raiding parties were landed on the Falkland Islands. One of these captured an Argentine position on Fanning Head overlooking Falkland Sound. There were no British but some Argentine casualties, and a number of prisoners were taken. Another raid attacked Goose Green Airfield and Argentine positions close-by. A naval bombardment was also conducted against military installations in the vicinity of Port Stanley, and other areas of East Falklands and Harrier attacks were undertaken in the area of Port Stanley Airfield and Fox Bay. A major amphibious landing in the area of San Carlos on East Falkland, involving three Royal Marine commandos and two battalions of the Parachute Regiment, commenced at around 0740 GMT (0440 local time). The landings were unopposed. Subsequently supporting arms were transferred to the shore, including artillery and air defence weapons. All the major infantry units were ashore by 1200 GMT (0900 local time). Local inhabitants gave a warm welcome to the British forces. During these operations, two UK Gazelle helicopters and one Harrier were lost. Prior to the operation, a Sea King helicopter was accidentally lost while transferring personnel between ships. At 1330 GMT (1030 local time) the Argentine Air Force began a series of

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attacks against UK vessels. During these they lost nine Mirage aircraft, five Sky Hawks, two Pucaros and four helicopters. Three British warships sustained minor damage but remained operational, one suffered damage to its engine room but not to its weapons, and a Type 21 Frigate, HMS Ardent, sank in the night of 21/22 May after being hit earlier by bombs and rockets. There are no details of the number of Argentine casualties. British casualties are estimated at 49 missing or dead and 55 wounded.

22 May 1982

No Argentine units were engaged on land. British forces consolidated their positions. An Argentine patrol boat was attacked and damaged by Sea Harriers in the Choiseul Sound inlet to the South of Port Stanley, and Harriers attacked military installations in the Goose Green area. During the raid several wrecked Pucara aircraft were identified. In the afternoon two Argentine Skyhawk aircraft approached the UK Bridgehead at San Carlos, but did not press home an attack.

All these measures were taken in exercise of the United Kingdom's inherent right to self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, in the face of Argentina's invasion of the Falkland Islands and illegal use of force to occupy them and to subjugate their people.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. D. PARSONS
