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LETTER DATED 17 JUNE 1982 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.1. OF  
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On express instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of the following communiqué issued by the Joint General Staff of the Argentine Armed Forces:

Communiqué No. 166 of 16 June 1982

"With regard to the events which gave rise to the decision to cease firing in the fight for Puerto Argentino and after a detailed analysis and compilation of all the available information, the Joint General Staff reports:

1. On 13 June at 1000 hours, the British forces began an intensive softening-up action by means of persistent artillery fire and naval and air bombardments, which caused material damage to our artillery and support arms.
2. At 2230 hours on the same day, the British forces launched a large-scale attack, exploiting basically their technological ability to operate at night, which was facilitated by the availability of special equipment for night vision, such as infra-red viewing and sighting equipment, portable missile-launchers, laser aiming systems, individual disposable mortars, and so on.
3. This attack was carried out with the massive support of helicopters, especially suitable for night operations, which allowed the enemy great mobility with minimum wear and tear on his troops.
4. The operation was planned along three main routes:
  1. Harriet - Tumbledown
  2. Longdon - Wireless Ridge
  3. Murrell - Cortley Hill

At 0500 hours, the enemy succeeded in breaking the defensive front and in penetrating our position. At the same time special forces transported by helicopter overwhelmed our defences from above and descended in the rear of our men, forming a circle that was practically impossible to break and compelling us to make a very difficult change of front.

5. While these troop movements were going on, the enemy artillery directed fire on to pinpoint targets and the assault helicopters provided support fire with extraordinary efficiency and continuity. With the help of these advanced weapons, the enemy destroyed our artillery and severely damaged our communications, thus reducing drastically our fighting capacity.

6. By the first light of dawn, at 0900 hours, the enemy had taken the high ground and the key points of the defence. The intensive fighting continued, with the use of reserves, until 1400 hours, when the situation became untenable.

7. At 1500 hours, a de facto cease fire took place, without previous agreement, and the Commander of the Malvinas Military Garrison carried out the necessary evaluation, concluding that it was impossible to continue resistance without causing unnecessary bloodshed.

8. In the light of the above events, he arranged a cease fire with the Commander of the British forces, a decision which applied exclusively to the actions taking place in the area of Puerto Argentino.

9. From an analysis of the fighting in Puerto Argentino and from a comparison with the actions fought throughout all the hostilities in the Malvinas area, it may be concluded that:

9.1 The taking of Puerto Argentino was the result of the clear superiority of the British forces in equipment and technology.

9.2 This equipment was used recently when the enemy launched his final offensive and with the certainty that any other method of fighting would have made success very difficult.

9.3 With the use of this equipment, much of which was completely new and unknown even on the international arms market, the Malvinas area of operations was transformed into a site for testing and experimentation.

9.4 The United States of America provided logistical support.

9.5 The British themselves recognized that the professional skill, valour and spirit of our troops constituted an obstacle that could be overcome only by a clear superiority in equipment, both qualitative and quantitative.

9.6 It must be recognized that technical superiority and the availability of equipment were responsible for the partial victory of Great Britain.

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10. The fact that international arms markets were closed to us had a basic impact on the development of operations.

11. In this evaluation it must be remembered that, in spite of our inferior technological capacity, differences in equipment and the impossibility of replacing our material losses, our armed forces, with skill, valour and resolution, not only confronted Great Britain, one of the major world Powers, supported by the United States of America, the European Common Market and with the acquiescence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, but also caused disproportionate damage in relation to the difference between the opposing forces and their equipment."

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

(Signed) Arnoldo M. LISTRE  
Ambassador

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