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LETTER DATED 13 APRIL 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.

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour, with reference to the letter dated 12 April 1982 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/14968), to communicate the following reply.

The Government of the United Kingdom considers that Security Council resolution 502 (1982) must be read as a whole. This means not just the operative paragraphs as suggested by the Permanent Representative of Argentina but also the preamble, which determined the existence of a breach of the peace as the result of an invasion by Argentine armed forces.

Following the adoption of Security Council resolution 502 (1982) on 3 April 1982 Argentina invaded South Georgia on 4 April 1982 in flagrant violation of the demand for an immediate cessation of hostilities and has not withdrawn its forces from the Falkland Islands in flagrant violation of the demand for withdrawal in operative paragraph 2. Indeed, Argentina has actually increased the numbers of its armed forces on the Falkland Islands and has introduced armed forces into South Georgia. These acts make even more serious Argentina's failure to comply with Security Council resolution 502 (1982). The Government of the United Kingdom welcomes any statement of preparedness by Argentina to comply with operative paragraph 2 of that resolution but must point out that Argentina is not in a position to impose conditions not approved by the Security Council in that resolution.

The Government of the United Kingdom rejects the charge in the Argentine note of "economic aggression". The United Kingdom and other States have taken legitimate countermeasures in the face of Argentina's aggression. Argentina cannot expect normal commercial relations to continue as if nothing had happened in the face of its invasions of the Falkland Islands and South Georgia.

The Government of the United Kingdom has noted the reference in the Argentine letter to the situation of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands. In reply, it would point out that the Falkland Islanders have made clear in free and fair elections their wish to remain British and to keep their present way of life. They have a right to self-determination and a right not to be subjected to alien domination, just like other peoples, including those inhabiting other small islands.

The Government of the United Kingdom announced its acceptance of Security Council resolution 502 (1982) including the call on the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to seek a diplomatic solution to their differences at the time of the resolution's adoption. At the same time, whilst Argentina has failed to comply with Security Council resolution 502 (1982) in the manner described above, the Government of the United Kingdom will continue to take whatever measures may be needed in exercise of its inherent right of self-defence under article 51 of the Charter.

(Signed) A. D. PARSONS
