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LETTER DATED 14 APRIL 1982 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
VENEZUELA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that on 13 April 1982 Dr. José Alberto Zambrano Velasco, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, made a statement relating to the situation that has arisen in connexion with the Malvinas.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and the text of the statement which I annex hereto, circulated as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Alberto MARTINI URDANETA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Venezuela
to the United Nations

Annex

Text of the statement made on 13 April 1982 at Caracas by the
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela

The National Government is observing with growing concern the developments which have arisen from the events that culminated in Argentina's recovery of the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands and which have now been particularly aggravated by the advance of the United Kingdom fleet towards the American continent. In these circumstances, and consistently following the principles which have served as the basis for its public position:

1. The National Government reaffirms its solidarity with the just claim made by the sister Argentine Republic in the face of a mutilation of its territory which others have attempted to impose upon it in the name of the exercise of force and colonialist domination. This claim is founded on an unalterable doctrine of the international law of the Americas, formulated by the Liberator Simón Bolívar, namely, the doctrine of uti possidetis iuris of 1810, according to which the new American republics must be established in the territories corresponding to the respective Spanish colonies at the time of independence, so that there could be no room for the reappearance of colonial enclaves in the Americas. Colonialist ambition disregarded the validity of this doctrine in the case of the Malvinas, as in many others, in an attempt to justify its systematic spoliations.

2. The Government of Venezuela also reaffirms its position in favour of peaceful and practical methods for settling this type of dispute, methods which must remedy past violations and must guarantee a just and lasting solution of the problem. The Government is convinced that the threatening resolution by arms which is now foreshadowed can be avoided if the United Kingdom shows a readiness to seek through negotiation a satisfactory and peaceful solution in keeping with the present era, with the lofty goals the United Kingdom itself has professed to hold in our times, and with the requirements of the international community, so as to put an end to colonialism in the Malvinas and return them to the legitimate exercise of Argentine sovereignty.

3. It is dismaying to observe the present attempts to reintroduce an unacceptable procedure which had apparently been banished from the post-colonial world and which constitutes a critical threat to the peace of the Americas. One of the most powerful fleets that could conceivably be assembled today is now steaming across the Atlantic to re-establish by force its imperial "rights" to a part of the Western Hemisphere. It is worth noting that all the doctrines of the international law of the Americas unambiguously reject the intervention of extra-hemispheric armed forces in our countries, and thus some fundamental principles and norms of the inter-American system are in danger of being violated. The consummation of warlike action would constitute an intolerable offence against Latin American dignity which would bring unforeseeably grave consequences.

4. The Venezuelan Government deplores the fact that this alarming movement of armed forces is being observed in silence by the organs of the international community which are responsible for the maintenance of international peace and

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security. This situation accentuates even further the scepticism with which the role of certain international bodies, specifically the United Nations Security Council, is being viewed. An attempt is being made to restrict the use of force for the exclusive benefit of those who used force in the past. The National Government has already expressed its disagreement with the resolution adopted by the Security Council, on the proposal of the United Kingdom without taking any account of the origin of the conflict or of Argentina's arguments. Furthermore, the Security Council did not think to resort to the regional agency, as indicated in Article 52, paragraph 3, of the Charter, even though the scene of the conflict is unquestionably within the region to which the Inter-American Treaty of Mutual Assistance is applicable. And as if that were not enough, at a time when arms are being taken up to reinforce those spoliations of long ago, the United Kingdom can take refuge not only behind its right to veto any provisions it does not like but also behind the concept of world peace.

5. For that reason, the National Government considers it imperative to endeavour to take advantage of the limitless possibilities of the diplomatic channel. At the multilateral level, Venezuela hopes that the Security Council will evaluate with greater care all the elements at issue and will act in the case of the Malvinas in a manner which is consistent with all the provisions adopted by the United Nations with regard to colonialism. At the regional level, not only must the feeling of hemispheric solidarity lead us to express that solidarity to Argentina; but Latin America must make the United Kingdom realize the grave affront represented by an armed attack on its part, in the name of colonialism, against a part of our hemisphere. At the bilateral level, we hope that the Governments of the United Kingdom and Argentina will intensify their efforts to negotiate in search of a satisfactory and practical solution which will preserve international peace and security. Venezuela is prepared to give the fullest support to any action which meets the aforementioned requirements, which serves to prevent the consummation of warlike action in the Americas and which guarantees the irrevocable extinction of those colonial vestiges in the South Atlantic whose fate today dismays world opinion.
