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LETTER DATED 8 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

I have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency with this letter the text of an announcement made on 7 May 1982 by the British Ministry of Defence and transmitted to the Government of Argentina.

The main purpose of this announcement was to reduce the possibility of misunderstanding about the United Kingdom's intentions with regard to measures in exercise of the right of self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter in the face of Argentina's continued illegal use of force to occupy the Falkland Islands contrary to the terms of the Charter and the Security Council's demand five weeks ago in resolution 502 for the immediate withdrawal of all Argentine forces. The announcement also has the purpose of ensuring that the warnings previously conveyed to the Government of Argentina and set out in Mr Whyte's letter of 9 April 1982 (S/14963), and my letters of 24 April (S/14997), 28 April (S/15006) and 30 April (S/15016) remain in force. Finally, the announcement gives further precision to the circumstances in which Argentine forces will be regarded as constituting a threat to interfere with the mission of British forces in the South Atlantic, having regard to the continued illegal occupation of the Falkland Islands and the attempted subjugation of the Falkland Islanders, a people of British descent and nationality living on British territory and entitled to the full protection of the UN Charter.

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

Annex

TEXT OF THE STATEMENT MADE BY THE BRITISH MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEFENCE ON 7 MAY 1982

The Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary made clear in his statement in the House of Commons this morning that Her Majesty's Government's highest priority is to achieve an early negotiated settlement of the current crisis: but that if the Government of Argentina did not show the same readiness and desire to reach a peaceful settlement, it should be in no doubt that Her Majesty's Government would do whatever may be necessary to end the unlawful Argentine occupation of the Falkland Islands.

In this context, Her Majesty's Government wishes to recall that on 23 April it informed the Government of Argentina that any approach on the part of Argentine warships, submarines, naval auxiliaries or military aircraft which could amount to a threat to interfere with the mission of British forces in the South Atlantic would encounter the appropriate response. In addition, all Argentine aircraft, including civil aircraft, engaging in surveillance of these British forces, would be regarded as hostile and were liable to be dealt with accordingly.

In addition, Her Majesty's Government has made clear that all Argentine vessels, including merchant vessels, or fishing vessels, apparently engaging in surveillance of or intelligence gathering activities against British forces in the South Atlantic would also be regarded as hostile and were liable to be dealt with accordingly.

From 1100 GMT on 30 April Her Majesty's Government established a Total Exclusion Zone around the Falkland Islands. Her Majesty's Government will continue to enforce this exclusion zone which

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applies not only to Argentine warships and Argentine naval auxiliaries but also to any other ships, including merchant and fishing vessels which are operating in support of the illegal occupation of the Falkland Islands by Argentine forces: and this also applies to any aircraft, whether military or civil, which is operating in support of that illegal occupation.

Her Majesty's Government has consistently made clear that the United Kingdom has the right to take whatever additional measures may be needed in exercise of its inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. Her Majesty's Government will take all necessary measures in the South Atlantic in the self-defence of British ships and aircraft engaged in operations and in re-supplying and reinforcing British forces in the South Atlantic. Because of the proximity of Argentine bases and the distances that hostile forces can cover undetected, particularly at night and in bad weather, Her Majesty's Government warns that any Argentine warship or military aircraft which are found more than 12 nautical miles from the Argentine coast will be regarded as hostile and are liable to be dealt with accordingly.
