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TELEGRAM DATED 10 MAY 1982 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF PANAMA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Panama, as a Latin American member of the Security Council of the United Nations and a member of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the non-aligned countries, is deeply concerned to witness the imminent escalation of the hostilities by the United Kingdom against the Argentine nation in pursuance of its anachronistic design to restore its colonial domination over the Malvinas archipelago.

As the faithful interpreter of Latin American opinion, my Government wishes to reiterate to you its most resolute support of your moves with the Argentine Government and the United Kingdom Government to achieve a peaceful settlement of the Malvinas crisis which, on the one hand, furthers the objective of decolonization set by the United Nations and, on the other hand, is consistent with the sovereign rights of Argentina and the most absolute respect for its dignity and territorial integrity.

The Panamanian Government wishes to appeal to the good sense and good judgement of the parties to the dispute and very particularly to the United Kingdom Government in order to prevent the peace efforts being made by the Secretary-General with the consent and support of the Security Council from being disrupted and frustrated by unilateral actions during the difficult negotiation being carried on under your auspices.

So far as Latin American public opinion and my country are concerned, it is clearly inadmissible and reprehensible that the United Kingdom Government should seek to establish a war zone, which it is attempting to extend up to a distance of 12 miles from the coast of the Argentine Republic and also insultingly to include a vast area of the Argentine territorial sea, which is a blatant mockery of the inter-American security system.

It is obvious that the United Kingdom Government is seeking to establish a blockade without the authority of the Security Council in contravention of Articles 39, 41 and 42 of the Charter and that its thoughtless, warlike, colonial and lawless attitude deserves to be condemned and repudiated by the world's conscience.

It is also reprehensible that the United Kingdom does not respect, in the South Atlantic, the Treaty of Tlatelolco on the prohibition of nuclear weapons in Latin America, is resorting to the inhuman use of explosive devices prohibited by the Geneva Conventions and is going so far as to attack and sink Argentine fishing boats engaged in collecting food, as happened in the case of the trawler Narval whose lifeboats were also attacked, as reported by the Argentine Navy, in open contravention of international humanitarian law.

In the opinion of the Panamanian Government, these actions by the United Kingdom Navy are also contrary to the principles set forth in the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and in its Protocols I, II and III, as well as in General Assembly resolution 36/93, adopted without a vote on 9 December 1981.

The Panamanian Government, echoing the views of the Latin American peoples, most strongly condemns the continuation of the hostilities and the imminent escalation of aggressive acts by the United Kingdom fleet in the South Atlantic against the Argentine nation, and at the same time reiterates its support for your efforts.

For political, moral and humanitarian reasons I request you to intensify and expedite as energetically as possible your highly important moves, with the co-operation of the States members of the Security Council and all Members of the Organization, in order to prevent the further loss of Argentine and British lives and any further prolongation of the sufferings of the Argentine people, who are subjected to an unjust colonial war on the part of a Power from outside the continent, whose hostile actions are regarded by our peoples as a collective affront to Latin America.

I conclude, Sir, with the wish that your peace moves may be successful, and I request you to bring this communication to the attention of the States members of the Security Council.

Aristides ROYO
President of the Republic of Panama
