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LETTER DATED 11 JUNE 1982 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. 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 submit to you further information concerning the situation in the area of the Malvinas Islands.

In this connexion, I wish to transmit to you the text of the reply sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship to the International Committee of the Red Cross concerning the measures taken to protect the civilian population in the islands. The note reads as follows:

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship presents its compliments to the Regional Delegation for Latin America - Southern Cone - of the International Committee of the Red Cross and has the honour to refer to note A 75 A 328 A 329 CHR GE of 28 May 1982, in which that organization requests information concerning the measures taken by the Argentine authorities to protect the civilian population in the Malvinas Islands, most of whom are foreign residents who have enjoyed and continue to enjoy, together with Argentine civilians, the treatment, guarantees, rights and obligations which protect and apply to all inhabitants of the Argentine Republic.

In this connexion it should be stated, first of all, that the authorities responsible for the military government of the Malvinas Islands have done everything necessary to provide the civilian population with the best medical care and the greatest security for their persons and property.

The Argentine authorities have ordered their military personnel to comply with strict rules of respect and protection both for the houses and movable property and for the lives, health, freedom of movement and usual activities of the population.

The Argentine Government can assure the International Committee of the Red Cross that in those fields in which it has had and continues to have jurisdictional responsibility in the Malvinas Islands, the local authority has taken all necessary steps to ensure that the following needs of the civilian population are met:

(a) Medical care:

(Sick and wounded) Beds and operating rooms in sufficient number.

Medical equipment in sufficient quantity.  
Drugs, plasma, blood, x-ray machines and analytical laboratory.

Intensive care unit.

A system for the evacuation of patients in serious condition to other health centres.

Emergency kits, respirators, etc.

The hospitals have been properly identified and marked.

It should be stated that the presence of the Argentine forces in the islands has made the opportunities for medical care available to the civilian population substantially better than they had been previously.

(b) Food and clothing:

Since mid-April, Argentine goodwill and acceptance of responsibility for maintaining a normal and abundant supply of food and clothing have been impeded by the blockade imposed on the islands by the United Kingdom Government.

(c) Communications:

The Argentine Government has ensured at all times the regularity and continuity of a satisfactory mail service between the islands and the outside world, as well as the functioning of its national and international telephone communication system, which has been and is being used by all the islanders. It has also expanded radio broadcasting - with broadcasts in English and Spanish - and has set up a colour television relay station.

(d) The inhabitants subject to the government of the Malvinas Islands, irrespective of nationality, enjoy the most complete freedom of movement, as provided in article 14 of the Constitution. Thus, those who so desire may travel to other countries, to Argentine territory on the continent or to other points within the islands. It should be pointed out in this connexion that the national Government has offered the civilian population residing in the Malvinas the option of remaining or leaving the islands. The latter choice was definitively impeded when the total exclusion zone declared by the United Kingdom became effective.

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(e) Spiritual care:

The Argentine authorities have at all times been especially assiduous in respecting and safeguarding the religious practices of the inhabitants of the Malvinas, protecting places of worship and ensuring the most complete freedom of movement of the clergy.

The ability to serve these needs of the civilian population has been compromised, so that it is difficult to provide such complete protection at all times, owing to the repeated attacks by the United Kingdom, which has necessitated additional effort on the part of the Argentine authorities in order to maintain such health and security conditions.

Indeed, the development of the hostilities, the imposition of the exclusion zone and the indiscriminate nature of the United Kingdom attacks, which have hit population centres, prompt the Argentine Government to state that the United Kingdom bears sole responsibility for the consequences that may result from certain shortages and limitations in meeting the needs of the civilian population of the Malvinas Islands.

It must also be added that the circumstances of the military situation in the South Atlantic theatre of operations have thus far conspired against the effective establishment of health and security areas.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship takes this opportunity to renew to the Regional Delegation for Latin America - Southern Cone - of the International Committee of the Red Cross the assurances of its highest and most distinguished consideration.

Buenos Aires, 8 June 1982"

I request you, Sir, to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Arnaldo M. LISTRE  
Ambassador

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