



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/40/478
12 July 1985
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

Fortieth session
Item 23 of the preliminary list*

QUESTION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS)

Letter dated 11 July 1985 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of
the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to write to you in order to forward a press communiqué (see annex) issued on 10 July by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic in connection with item 23 of the preliminary list.

I request you to arrange for this letter and the attached press communiqué to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly and brought to the attention of the Special Committee on decolonization.

(Signed) Luis E. CAPPAGLI
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/40/50/Rev.1.

ANNEX

Press communiqué dated 10 July 1985

Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Worship of Argentina

What separates the Argentine Republic from the United Kingdom is the question of sovereignty over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands.

This is the basic problem; if it did not exist, neither would there exist difficulties with respect to trade, economic and diplomatic relations.

This is not to say that the transfer of sovereignty is essential in order to bring about the resumption of trade and diplomatic relations. It merely means that such resumption would have solid foundations once the matter which separates the two nations ceases to be ignored by one of them.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations upheld this view in his report to the General Assembly at the thirty-ninth session by stating: "Such measures could conceivably, in my view, facilitate addressing the issue that lies at the core of their current estrangement, in order to achieve a lasting solution of the problem".

The United Kingdom Government is quite correct in its observation that we must advance step by step in order to rebuild mutual trust and solve all our problems. That is a realistic and appropriate position. What is not realistic is the attempt to advance step by step in secondary matters, brushing aside all treatment of the fundamental discrepancy.

In this regard, the Argentine Government has taken note of the United Kingdom Government's decision to terminate the ban imposed on imports from Argentina in 1982. According to the official announcement, this measure reflects the United Kingdom's desire to improve relations with Argentina.

This is a positive development; it is to be appreciated at its true worth and welcomed, and it betokens the prestige achieved by the Argentine democracy in the international community.

As the United Kingdom communiqué states, it is of benefit to the parties that trade between the two nations should flourish. But there can be no doubt that for trade to flourish it is necessary to have stable political conditions and mutual trust. Firstly, a stable relationship requires that the central issue separating our two nations should not be ignored; secondly, mutual trust requires the elimination of threats to the security of the Argentine Republic of any type, such as the threat presented by the excessive and disproportionate militarization of the Islands, and the maintenance of the so-called protection zone.

Accordingly, although we are today witnessing a genuinely more flexible British policy, we have to seek prompt and realistic responses to all the other

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questions that need to be considered, because otherwise we would discover that only the practical questions of interest to United Kingdom policy were being dealt with and that everything else was being ignored.

We stress that the discussion on sovereignty is a specific question par excellence, since on it the rest depends and without it, after all, those so-called practical questions would become illusions.

Hence it has been the policy of the Argentine Republic, upheld by numerous decisions of the United Nations and other multilateral forums, to maintain that the problem of sovereignty must necessarily be included in any type of negotiation undertaken with the United Kingdom.

Not only is this a legitimate demand, it is also a realistic appraisal of the situation; it certainly does not signify a specific position in the agenda of the negotiations or a predetermined date for the solution of all the issues.

The Argentine Government hopes that the United Kingdom's lifting of the ban on imports constitutes the profound expression of a negotiating spirit, and it is to confirm this that it is proposing to the United Kingdom Government some important steps forward.

Accordingly, it invites the United Kingdom Government to initiate negotiations in the course of the next 60 days, and to this end it is prepared to embark on the necessary preparations forthwith, either through the mission of good offices entrusted by the General Assembly to the Secretary-General of the United Nations or, if preferred, through friendly Powers that represent the respective interests.

The Argentine Government has not deemed it necessary to make a formal declaration of cessation of hostilities, the de facto existence of which has been recognized in various resolutions of the United Nations. However, if this matter is viewed by the United Kingdom Government as the remaining obstacle to the initiation of negotiations, the Argentine Government would be prepared to make the declaration as soon as the United Kingdom Government agrees to initiate the general negotiations repeatedly recommended by the international community.

The Argentine Government, in its desire to strengthen peace through the diplomatic channel, trusts that it will receive a prompt and favourable response to this proposal.
