

385. Telegram From the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State¹

Santo Domingo, August 16, 1982, 2200Z

5572. Subject: UNGA Resolution on Falkland Islands; Argentine/UK Economic Sanctions.

1. (S-Entire text)

2. Summary. In a private meeting with Argentine Foreign Minister Aguirre, Assistant Secretary Enders conveyed USG willingness to seek a consensus text on UNGA resolution on the Falkland Islands,² within limits of U.S. position. He also conveyed the hope that Aguirre and Secretary Schultz could meet at the UNGA session. Aguirre (who showed a monomaniacal interest in the UN question and was obviously not in play on British sanctions) rejected proposals from the British which Enders conveyed seeking to bring about lifting of mutual economic sanctions. Neither side mentioned U.S. military sanctions. End summary.

3. At Assistant Secretary Enders request, he met for one hour with Argentine Foreign Minister Juan Ramon Aguirre Lanari at the Argen-

¹ Source: Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820426-0735. Secret; Immediate; Exdis. Sent for information Immediate to Buenos Aires, London, and USUN.

² The text of the draft resolution, which had been placed on the UNGA agenda at the request of the Mexican UN Representative on behalf of 21 Latin American countries on August 16, was transmitted by the Department in telegram 234980 to Buenos Aires, London, and Mexico City, August 20. In the same telegram, the Department advised the posts that the draft "includes objectionable references to Non-Aligned Movement declarations" which "support Argentine claims to sovereignty over the Falklands and calls for negotiations to begin as soon as possible." It added: "At this time the US does not intend to take an activist role in negotiating an acceptable text, although we recognize that we may want to reconsider this at a later stage." (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820435-0106)

tine residence in Santo Domingo the day before the Presidential inauguration. After general expressions of concern at the poor state of U.S.-Argentine relations, Aguirre made a pointed pitch for “positive gestures” by the USG, in light of the adverse impact on Argentine public opinion of U.S. support for Great Britain in the Falklands crisis. When Ambassador Enders referred to the broad range of issues in our relations, Aguirre insisted that the principal question was U.S. policy on the Malvinas issue. He urged that greater accommodation on this matter be achieved in order to undercut the forces on the extreme left and right who were working against the process of democratization now going on in Argentina.

UN Resolution: Inscription and Substance

4. When Aguirre referred to the proposed UNGA resolution on the Falkland Islands, Ambassador Enders identified the two principles of the U.S. position, namely that the resolution not prejudge the sovereignty issue and that it not impose an unrealistic time-table on negotiations. Within those limits, the United States Government would be interested in exploring whether a consensus existed.

5. Aguirre described the substance of the resolution (the text of which was not available at the meeting) which he summarized as calling on the parties to renew negotiations on the Malvinas dispute, under the auspices of the UN Secretary General who would report to the next session of the UNGA. Ambassador Enders, commenting that a detailed consideration of the text would be inappropriate at this point, noted that it appeared that the introductory paragraphs of the resolution contained language which might prejudge the sovereignty issue, and the operative part contained possibly prejudicial timing instructions. He concluded that his purpose was to indicate a possible direction for bilateral consideration working towards a possible convergence on this matter.³

6. With regard to inscription of the agenda item, Ambassador Enders also conveyed a positive inclination to consider U.S. support for inscription, provided the proposed text of the item did not prejudge

³ On August 17, Streater met with Bullard in London to discuss the draft UN resolution and the proposal for the resumption of negotiations under UN auspices. In telegram 18181 from London, August 17, Streater provided a summary of the meeting, noting that Bullard had stated “that the British intend to stonewall in New York. Bullard said that, at the political level in the U.K. Government, there was no question of resuming negotiations with the Argentines for the foreseeable future. Thatcher is unalterably opposed, and there is no support within the Tory party, or indeed in the Opposition, for fresh talks.” Streater responded: “Though I was without instructions, I believed that the British might be taking an unnecessarily stiff position, in view of the fact that there is such widespread international support for new talks. Bullard agreed that even the Europeans would be clamoring for talks, but, he said, ‘They are just not going to happen.’” (Reagan Library, Dennis C. Blair Files, United Kingdom 1982 (08/01/1982–10/03/1982))

the sovereignty question. Aguirre responded that, in light of the August 19 deadline to submit the inscription request, the proposal would best move ahead as a Latin American request, but a public position of support by the U.S. Government would be a welcome positive gesture.

7. In sketching the principal points of the U.S. position for a possible UNGA resolution, Ambassador Enders expressed the hope that Secretary Shultz would be able to meet with Aguirre at the General Assembly session. Aguirre confirmed that he would be attending and looked forward to the possibility of such a meeting.

Lifting of Argentine/UK Economic Sanctions

8. Ambassador Enders told Aguirre that the British Government now understood that it would be difficult for the Argentine Government to terminate its trade embargo as a pre-condition to the unblocking of Argentine accounts. The British now looked for a commitment to an "early" end of the trade sanctions combined with specific action in the field of civil aviation, either the reestablishment of the London-Buenos Aires route or the Argentine extension of overflight rights to Great Britain pending signature of a new civil aviation agreement. Aguirre said the proposal was impossible, as it granted Great Britain something of significance first. While the Argentine funds were blocked, it would be intolerable for Argentina to make such a gesture. When Ambassador Enders suggested the possibility that all sanctions be lifted at the same time, Aguirre responded that, as Great Britain had taken the first step in imposing sanctions, it should take the first step in lifting them. Ambassador Enders said he believed that Great Britain would be ready to take a first step, provided that it was agreed that Argentina would act immediately afterwards. Aguirre concluded that the matter should be studied. While it was his personal view that the renewal of flights would be impossible, steps to end the economic sanctions should be considered. Of course, he added, the issue of the economic sanctions could be resolved more quickly if Great Britain indicated a willingness to begin negotiations on the sovereignty issue.

Public Description of the Meeting

9. At Aguirre's request he and Ambassador Enders agreed on the contents of the description of the substance of their conversation should there be any press inquiries. The meeting would be described as a conversation on bilateral relations and the subject of the Falkland/Malvinas Islands, a meeting between Aguirre and the Secretary in the context of the General Assembly was proposed, and the United States promised to study the resolution on the Falkland/Malvinas which would be presented at the General Assembly. Aguirre asked explicitly that no specific reference be made to any economic issues, as such references would be sure to raise suspicions in Argentina.

Anderson