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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

31 December 1982

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T 242/82

Dear Prime Minister,

I have received and greatly welcome the message which you asked General Shortis to transmit about the Air Force officers awaiting trial. As Mr. Nott explained to you, the allegations about torture were bound to cause domestic problems for us, as I know they have for you.

It is our firm resolve to support you in maintaining the rule of law and in making a success of your policy of reconciliation so vital for Zimbabwe and for all of southern Africa.

As you know, we recently increased the number of our personnel serving with BMATT. This was, I feel, a useful opportunity for us to demonstrate our desire to sustain the momentum of our relations with Zimbabwe.

We are also ready to proceed with arrangements for the sale of Hunter aircraft and ground equipment in order to help restore the damage done to the Zimbabwe Air Force by the act of sabotage at the Thornhill Air Base. I have asked Mr. Cranley Onslow, Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

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responsible for Africa, to take the opportunity of his visit to Harare to explore with you how we might best proceed together, and in particular to discuss the question of timing.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Shabete

The Honourable R.G. Mugabe