



cc Fco

SKW

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

13 December 1985

*Dear Secretary-General.*

Thank you very much for your letter of 13 December with which you enclosed copies of your letter to Geoffrey Howe and the letter from the Group of Eminent Persons to President Botha.

I was very pleased to be able to meet the members of the Group this morning and was greatly encouraged by their approach. I have already sent a message to President Botha urging him to respond positively to their letter and, in particular, to agree to their request to visit South Africa before the end of January.

As you know we stand ready to provide the Group with any practical help which they need.

With best wishes,

*Yours sincerely*  
*Margaret Thatcher*

His Excellency Mr. Shridath S. Ramphal, A.C., Kt., C.M.G.

SKW

CCP

13 December, 1985

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

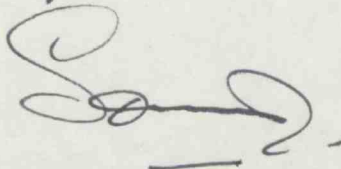
I have written separately to Geoffrey Howe this afternoon (as well as to the Australian and Canadian High Commissioners) in terms of the attached letter, requesting HMG's assistance in transmitting a message from the Group of Eminent Persons to the State President in South Africa. The Group wish me to make a copy of this available to you directly and by the first opportunity.

They also wish me to convey on their behalf their deep appreciation of the opportunity for meeting with you today and to say how much they valued the discussion they had at No. 10.

I am sure you would be pleased to know that the Group has made an excellent start in its own deliberations; that they are approaching the enormously difficult task ahead in an extremely positive manner and that this first meeting has demonstrated, as I am sure their visit to No. 10 would have shown, how very quickly they have established a group relationship. Given their collective commitment to further the purposes that you and your colleagues envisaged for them in Nassau, I believe you can be assured that everything possible is being done on the part of the Commonwealth to make this effort a success.

Much, of course, depends on the co-operation of others and here we shall continue to need the British Government's assistance in encouraging a positive climate in Pretoria. Other Commonwealth Governments are assisting in promoting such a climate among other parties. We must all hope that these efforts succeed in what increasingly looks like the limited time we have available for promoting a just settlement by peaceful means in South Africa.

With deep respect,



Shridath S. Ramphal

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, MP,  
Prime Minister,  
10 Downing Street,  
London, S.W.1.

13 December, 1985

*Dear Sir,*

The Group of Eminent Persons constituted under the Nassau Accord on Southern Africa has just completed its first meeting here in Marlborough House. They have agreed to send to HE The State President of South Africa a letter signed by the two Co-Chairmen of the Group intimating their wish to visit South Africa at an early date in pursuance of their mandate and inviting the co-operation of the authorities in Pretoria for this purpose. They have agreed that I should invite the Governments of Australia, Britain and Canada through your Embassies in Pretoria to convey this letter and I write to do so, enclosing the original letter.

I should be most grateful if, on behalf of the Group, the three Missions in Pretoria could co-ordinate their action to ensure delivery of the message to the State President at the earliest possible opportunity. On the assumption that it should be possible for this to be done on Monday next I am, at the request of the Group, making a copy of it available directly to the South African Embassy in London on Monday, with an indication that it is being formally transmitted in Pretoria by the three Commonwealth Missions.

It is the specific wish of the Group that I should invite all three Governments to use their good offices and influence with the authorities in Pretoria to encourage an early and positive response to their letter. They are most anxious to avoid a protracted process of correspondence with regard to details and feel very keenly the importance of their meeting with the South African Government as early as possible. I am sure you will agree that there is very good reason for avoiding such a process and on the Group's behalf I invite your assistance in your Government's contacts with Pretoria.

*Sincerely,  
Shridath S. Ramphal*

Shridath S. Ramphal

The Rt. Hon. Sir Geoffrey Howe, QC, MP,  
Secretary of State for Foreign and  
Commonwealth Affairs,  
Downing Street,  
London, S.W.1.



# COMMONWEALTH GROUP OF EMINENT PERSONS

Established pursuant to the Commonwealth Accord on Southern Africa, Nassau, October 1985

Cables: COMSECGEN LONDON SW1

Telex: 27678

Telephone: 01-839 3411

Marlborough House

Pall Mall

London SW1Y 5HX

13 December, 1985

Dear Mr. State President,

We are writing on behalf of the seven member Group established by Commonwealth Heads of Government pursuant to their Nassau 'Accord on Southern Africa'. You may recall that the text of the Accord together with the composition of our Group was transmitted at the request of the Commonwealth Secretary-General to your Government on 25 November by the diplomatic representatives of Australia, Britain and Canada. The Accord constitutes the broad mandate under which we are working.

We have today concluded our first meeting in London. We are anxious to get down to business as quickly as possible in a spirit of helpfulness and with the co-operation of all the parties concerned, working quietly and essentially in non-public ways. We therefore attach the utmost importance to visiting South Africa for consultations with your Government and all who are in a position to contribute to the achievement of our objective. This we perceive as being essential for encouraging and facilitating the process of political dialogue envisaged in the Accord.

Consistent with our purpose, we would need while in South Africa to meet with the Government, with the true representatives of the black population as well as with others whose views would be relevant to such a process. In our discussions we will seek to clarify attitudes towards beginning the dialogue envisaged and to elicit views on ways of advancing it.

2/

HE Mr. P.W. Botha,  
State President,  
Republic of South Africa.

Members:

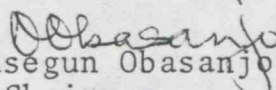
The Rt.Hon. MALCOLM FRASER (Co-Chairman); General OLUSEGUN OBASANJO (Co-Chairman)

The Rt.Hon. LORD BARBER; Dame NITA BARROW; Mr. JOHN MALECELA; Sardar SWARAN SINGH; The Most Rev. Archbishop EDWARD W. SCOTT DD.

We have noted with appreciation the statement by your Foreign Minister, The Hon. Pik Botha, on 26 November. Since it is our clear wish that our first contacts should if possible be with your Government, we would very much hope that a visit along the lines outlined above could be arranged at the earliest possible date, preferably before the end of January, 1986.

Yours sincerely,

  
Malcolm Fraser  
Co-Chairman

  
Olusegun Obasanjo  
Co-Chairman

