



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 March 1986

Dear Charles,

Representations by the Twelve on the Current  
Unrest in South Africa

I am writing to let you know that the Netherlands Presidency proposed earlier this afternoon (COREU CPE PRES HAG 464 enclosed) that they should make immediate representations on behalf of the Twelve to the South African authorities about their handling of the unrest in which over 30 people have been killed in the last 48 hours.

As you will know, there has been considerable press and television coverage of the violence in the UK and it was the lead story - "Bloodbath in South Africa" - in the "Daily Express" this morning.

It is clearly most important that the South African authorities should use the minimum force necessary in handling the current unrest, if the situation is not going to lead to a major tragedy like those of Sharpeville and Uitenhage in the past, with all the consequences that would have, not least for the future of the COMGEP initiative.

In the circumstances, and faced with the Dutch proposal, the Foreign Secretary has judged it right to agree to the Presidency making representations. We have however proposed certain modifications in the line which the Dutch propose to take. (I enclose a copy of our telegraphic reply). An additional advantage of having the Twelve make representations is that it makes it unnecessary for us to take action bilaterally.

Yours ever,  
Colin Budd

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
PS/10 Downing Street

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Prime Minister  
A knee-jerk reaction,  
but reasonably sensibly  
expressed (if they used  
our anecdote).

COP  
24/3

FM LA HAYE COREU  
TO ALL COREU - IMMEDIAT DESKBY 27/3 - 13.00Z

CPE PRES HAG 464  
27-3-1986 12.53 L.T.

HAD/SAT/D

DIFFUSION RESTREINTE  
DISTRIBUTION LIMITEE

OBJET: PROPOSED DEMARCHE BY THE TWELVE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN  
GOVERNMENT ON THE PRESENT UNREST IN SOUTH AFRICA

THE PRESIDENCY HAS LEARNED THAT DURING THE PAST 48 HOURS,  
VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS INCREASED CONSIDERABLY AND  
THAT WELL OVER 30 PEOPLE HAVE DIED, MOST OF THEM AS A RESULT  
OF POLICE-ACTIONS, A.O. IN BOPHUTHATSWANA.

THE PRESIDENCY IS HIGHLY CONCERNED ABOUT THESE DEVELOPMENTS  
AND PROPOSES TO PARTNERS TO EXPRESS THE DEEP CONCERN OF  
THE TWELVE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TODAY, 27 MARCH.

THIS PROPOSED STEP SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

- AN URGENT CALL ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO RESTRAIN  
POLICE-ACTIONS IMMEDIATELY.,
- A CALL TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT IN  
THE SHORTEST POSSIBLE TERM MEASURES TO FACILITATE A NATIONAL  
DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE TRUE REPRESENTATIVES  
OF SOUTH AFRICA'S BLACK POPULATION.
- A REFERENCE TO EARLIER RELEVANT EPC-DECLARATIONS.

UNLESS PARTNERS EXPRESS MAJOR OBJECTIONS BEFORE 15.00 HOURS  
G.M.T. TODAY, THE PRESIDENCY WILL CARRY OUT THE DEMARCHE  
TODAY 27 MARCH OR, AT THE LATEST ON 28 MARCH.

FIN DE TEXTE  
LA HAYE COREU

OUT COREU TELEGRAM

Classification

Precedence

DIFFUSION RESTREINTE

IMMEDIAT DESKBY 271730Z

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1 ZCZC

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6 271615Z MARCH 86

CLASS

7 DIFFUSION RESTREINTE

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9 OBJET: PROPOSED DEMARCHE TO SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT

10 REF: CPE PRES HAG 464

11 1. The United Kingdom agrees with the proposal for a  
12 Presidency demarche to the South African authorities but would  
13 wish to see a slight modification in its terms, as follows:

14 (a) instead of first turet, substitute <sup>QUOTE</sup> ~~draw~~ Draw the attention  
15 of the South African Government to the continuing need for  
16 restraint on the part of its police force unqu<sup>ot</sup>e.

17 (b) instead of second turet, substitute quote underline to the  
18 South African Government <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ increasingly urgent need for them  
19 to make a positive response to the calls for measures to  
20 facilitate a national dialogue with the <sup>TRUE</sup> ~~the~~ representatives of  
21 the black population. unqu<sup>ot</sup>e.

22 2. The United Kingdom considers that an approach in these  
23 terms would stand a better chance of having a constructive  
24 effect on the South African authorities.

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Comcen reference	Time of despatch	EEC Embassies	

OUT COREU TELEGRAM (CONT)

Classification

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DIFFUSION RESTRENTE

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3 COREU LON

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