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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

3 June 1987

VENICE ECONOMIC SUMMIT: SOUTH AFRICA

We have received the enclosed message to the Prime Minister from Mr. Mulroney proposing that the Venice Economic Summit should issue a declaration on South Africa and attaching a draft. This is, of course, most unwelcome. I think there is a lot to be said for the Prime Minister replying rather promptly before the Summit to the effect that we regard such a declaration as undesirable and unlikely to help in the present situation. Clearly it would be better if such a response could be co-ordinated with some of the other Summit governments, notably the French and Germans. You will wish to consider the scope for this as rapidly as possible.

I am copying this letter and enclosure to Sir Robert Armstrong.

(C. D. POWELL)

A. C. Galsworthy, Esq., C.M.G.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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cc PC

Canadian High Commission



Haut Commissariat du Canada

ODP
3/6

June 2, 1987

Dear Charles:

I attach the text of a letter from Prime Minister Mulroney to Prime Minister Thatcher concerning the discussion of South Africa at the Venice Summit together with the text of a draft "Venice Declaration on a Democratic and Just Future for South Africa". I have provided copies of these texts to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours sincerely,

L. A. Delvoie
Deputy High Commissioner

Mr. Charles Powell
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
(Overseas Affairs)
10 Downing Street
London

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See
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PRIME MINISTER · PREMIER MINISTRE

OTTAWA K1A 0A2

June 1, 1987

Dear Margaret,

Your Personal Representative will have made you aware of the importance I attach to our taking action at Venice to promote a peaceful resolution of the crisis in South Africa. That crisis is deepening under the current repression. Pressures are clearly building which will sooner or later result in widespread violence. It is, in my view, vital that the West through a Summit statement come down firmly on the side of human rights by roundly condemning apartheid and encouraging negotiations towards the formation of a non-racial representative government in South Africa.

From my talks with African leaders, especially during my visit to Africa earlier this year, I have become more convinced than ever of the need for Summit action. Silence at Venice would be conspicuous and would send quite the wrong signal. In the immediate aftermath of a whites-only election, silence would be read as indifference at best. It would certainly encourage complacency on the part of the government and lead to doubts among blacks about the seriousness of Western opposition to apartheid.

The fears among many white South Africans about their future, which the elections underlined, can only be allayed through dialogue with the genuine representatives of non-white South Africans. If this dialogue does not take place, the prospects for all

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
10 Downing Street
London
England

South Africans will be grim indeed. Given the South African régime's desire to be part of the "West", I believe that the Summit countries are well placed to be able over time to help the parties enter into dialogue. President Botha's letter to Summit leaders, whatever its distortions and misconceptions, provides, I believe, a useful opening to test his claimed commitment to dialogue.

As you may be aware from your Personal Representative, I am proposing that we consider establishing a Summit group, directed by and possibly composed of some or all of our Foreign Ministers, which would be seized of the South African issue until the next Summit and which would be able to respond to any opportunities to promote dialogue. I would welcome your views on this or any other means the Summit could take to encourage dialogue. It may be that the South African authorities, especially in the light of the election, will remain obdurate, but that does not remove the need for the West to signal that real negotiations are the only way out of the crisis. My discussions with African leaders have reinforced my own conviction that such a line of communication needs to be put in place.

All Summit members are providing aid to some or all of South Africa's neighbours and to the victims of apartheid in South Africa. We have all substantially increased that aid recently. I believe we should be able to endorse what we are already doing in this area.

I am attaching for your consideration a draft declaration on South Africa. It embodies the various elements which together would, in my view, send the appropriate signal from Venice. It is designed, among other things, to provide a reassuring vision of a post-apartheid South Africa. I fully recognize that some Summit partners have doubts about the advisability of any Summit declaration. I sincerely hope that the concerns that lie behind those doubts are answered by the draft declaration.

The South African issue is one with which some of us will be grappling at the Francophone Summit and the Commonwealth Meeting to be held this fall in Québec City and Vancouver respectively. In facing the challenge of hosting these events as well as the Economic Summit next year, I think it would be helpful if at Venice we could be on record as having taken a strong stand against apartheid and for dialogue.

I look forward to our discussions at Venice.

Yours sincerely,

Julian

DRAFT VENICE DECLARATION

ON A DEMOCRATIC AND JUST FUTURE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

We, the Heads of State or Government of seven major democracies, are profoundly concerned by the deteriorating situation in South Africa. We believe that apartheid is the root cause of repression and violence in South Africa and of instability in the region. We join together in expressing our abhorrence of apartheid and of all policies designed to perpetuate it under whatever guise. Apartheid is an inherently evil system of institutionalized racism based on the denial of the human and civil rights of most South Africans. Only the dismantling of apartheid and the establishment of a non-racial and representative government in a united and non-fragmented state can lead to a just and lasting solution of the crisis in South Africa.

We, the Heads of State or Government, envision a new and democratic South Africa. We envision a South Africa all of whose people would enjoy equal political, economic and social rights and opportunities. We envision a South Africa which would be at peace with its neighbours and a force for progress in the region. We look forward to the day when South Africa would be able to assume its rightful place in the international community.

South Africans can make this future theirs only by breaking out of the cycle of violence. They can make it theirs only through dialogue and negotiations. To bear fruit, however, these negotiations must involve genuine leaders.

It is for the South Africans themselves to determine their new constitution. We believe nevertheless that genuine negotiations would result in a multi-party democracy based on the guarantee of basic human rights to all South Africans, on the equality of all South Africans before the law, and on the free and fair exercise of universal adult franchise. At the same time we believe that a constitution arrived at through genuine negotiations would provide all necessary guarantees for the security of minorities and their right to participate equitably in government and all other spheres of national life.

We, the Heads of State or Government, have asked our Foreign Ministers to remain seized of the crisis in South Africa and to promote any possible dialogue, including the establishment of an appropriate group designed for that purpose, leading to a new and democratic South Africa. If the contending parties in South Africa are willing to take risks for peace, they may be assured of our full support for that objective. We also agreed that we would review the situation in South Africa again next year.

We, the Heads of State or Government, express our support for the individual and collective efforts of the member countries of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) to develop their economies and to reduce their vulnerability to South African sanctions. Our governments are committed to coordinating among themselves and with other donors our development assistance to the SADCC countries. We are also committed to the coordination of our humanitarian aid to the victims of apartheid. In the context of negotiations in South Africa, we would be willing to participate in a significant international effort to assist the victims of apartheid.

We, the Heads of State or Government of seven major democracies, express the hope that all South Africans will appreciate the depth of our concern and our resolve. We stand ready to assist them in realizing a peaceful, prosperous and secure future. Our governments have each pursued policies aimed at promoting dialogue and negotiations. We remain committed to the active pursuit of that goal, now more urgent than ever.