

FCO PRESS CONFERENCE : 12.30 : TUESDAY : 25 MAY 1982

Captain Astiz

Spokesman was asked if the British Government had replied to the Swedish and French requests to interview Captain Astiz. He replied that the UK Government had been in touch with the Swedish and French Governments this morning about Captain Astiz. The captain remained at Ascension Island and had been visited by a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Spokesman added that both the Argentine Government and Captain Astiz had recently indicated that he was not prepared to answer questions on matters of concern to the Swedish and French Governments. Britain would continue to adhere to her obligations under the relevant Geneva Conventions. No decision had been taken on the timing of Captain Astiz's eventual return to Argentina.

UN Security Council

Spokesman was asked how Britain would respond to the Irish draft resolution at the UN Security Council calling for a 72-hour ceasefire in the Falklands. He replied that HMG never disclosed its voting intentions in the Security Council in advance. Ministers had made it unequivocally clear that calls for a ceasefire were not acceptable unless directly linked to a commitment and a timetable for withdrawal of all Argentine forces from the Islands, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 502. The Government would be guided accordingly in New York.

President Reagan

Spokesman was asked to comment on reports that President Reagan might not come to Britain next month. He replied that there was no truth in these stories, which President Reagan and the White House had denied.

Australian Foreign Minister

Spokesman said that Mr Onslow received a call this morning from the Australian Foreign Minister, Mr Anthony Street. The discussion centred on the Falklands and Mr Onslow thanked Mr Street for Australia's strong and consistent support throughout the crisis.