

press. Paris  
1/84

Ref. A084/227

MR COLES

A.S.C. 27  
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FRANCE: PM  
Visit  
J.P. 1/84

The Prime Minister's Visit to Paris

I have now agreed with Monsieur Attali an official text for this afternoon's press announcement. It reads as follows:

"At the invitation of the President of the French Republic the Prime Minister will go to Paris for lunch and talks with him on Monday 23 January. She will leave London that morning and return in the afternoon".

2. In order that this should not look like a crisis meeting, the President hopes that in background briefing it will be made clear that the Prime Minister and he agreed at Athens that it would be useful for them to meet in this way: this visit is thus well foreseen.
3. The French now propose that the Prime Minister should arrive at Villacoublay at 12.15 pm French time. Monsieur Attali asked if the Prime Minister would expect to be met by a French Minister. I said that I was sure that she would not expect that. My understanding was that she would be met by the British Ambassador who would convey her to the venue for the lunch and then make himself scarce.
4. The lunch will almost certainly be at the Chateau de Marly: there is a remote chance that that will not be possible and in that case the lunch will be at the Chateau de Rambouillet. The French will expect the Prime Minister to be accompanied by you and Mr Lederer; the President will be accompanied by Monsieur Attali and his interpreter. Monsieur Attali queried the size of the accompanying party. I said that it was important for the Prime Minister to have a communications base, which would mean having one duty clerk and one assistant. He was content with that.
5. I have given the Foreign and Commonwealth Office the revised text of the announcement.

RIA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

20 January 1984



10 DOWNING STREET

## Press Notice

### VISIT BY THE PRIME MINISTER TO PARIS - 23 JANUARY

At the invitation of the President of the French Republic, M Mitterrand, the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher, FRS, MP will go to Paris for lunch and talks with him on Monday, 23 January. She will leave London that morning and return in the afternoon.

20 January 1984

#### NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. It was agreed at their meeting in Athens last December that they would hold another meeting early in the French Presidency. The purpose of the visit is to discuss matters of common concern, particularly European Community questions, now that France has assumed the Presidency. Other issues such as East-West relations may also be discussed. We understand President Mitterrand proposes to hold a number of bilateral meetings with his European partners before the March European Council.
2. The last Anglo-French Summits were in London on 20/21 October 1983, and Paris on 4/5 November 1982. Outside the Summit framework the Prime Minister and President Mitterrand met in London on 17 May 1982, and they frequently meet in the margins of other events, the last occasion being in Athens during the EC Council (4-6 December 1983).