



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

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Dear Ambassador,

Thank you for your letters to Jeremy Browne of 23 April, offering discussions on the issues of air links to the Falklands Islands and fisheries co-operation. The Minister has asked me to respond as the Director responsible for the UK's Overseas Territories.

Under the Falkland Islands Constitution of 2008, the issues of air transport links and fisheries are the legal responsibility of the Falkland Islands Government. I therefore forwarded your proposals on to the Falkland Islands Government for their consideration, and I am pleased to enclose their reply to me outlining their position.

You will see that the Falkland Islands Government welcomes any genuine initiative that helps to restore a spirit of co-operation between Argentina and the Falkland Islands, but they remain very concerned that Argentina's offers come in the context of increasing hostility from your Government towards the Islanders.

Nevertheless the Falkland Islands Government is content to explore flights issues with the Government of Argentina, subject to a commitment from your Government that it will not seek to block the LAN Chile air link, and that the Government of Argentina will also review its policy on banning charter planes from overflying Argentine airspace.

In respect of your offer to resume discussions on the mandate of the South Atlantic Fisheries Commission (SAFC), we would be happy to work with you on proposals that focus on improving the SAFC. Both the British Government and Falkland Islands Government are committed to the objectives of the SAFC and would welcome a resumption of scientific co-operation to underpin the broader conservation of the South Atlantic. As you will also note from the attached letter, however, the Falkland Islands Government have asked me to reiterate that discussions on fisheries co-operation should not be used as a forum for a discussion of sovereignty, which the Falkland Islands people do not want.

Subject to clarification of these points, I am advised that the Falkland Islands Government would be content to have preliminary discussions with the Government of Argentina on these issues, in which the UK Government is also happy to participate.

I look forward to your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Roberts', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Colin Roberts
Director