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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

1 March 1983

ANGLO/NORWEGIAN CO-OPERATION ON COUNTER-TERRORIST
ACTIVITIES IN THE NORTH SEA

The Prime Minister has noted the contents of your letter of 23 February.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (Ministry of Defence) and Tony Rawsthorne (Home Office).

A. J. COLES

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

THIS IS A COPY. THE ORIGINAL IS
RETAINED UNDER SECTION 3 (4)
OF THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

23 February 1983

Prime Minister

To note.

A.S.C. 24/2.

New York,

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Anglo/Norwegian Co-operation on Counter-Terrorist Activities in
the North Sea

The Prime Minister may wish to be aware of the stage we have reached in discussions with the Norwegians regarding the security of oil and gas installations in the North Sea.

Official talks began at the end of 1978 with the objective of establishing a joint contingency plan and developing bilateral co-operation in order to counter terrorist threats to the installations. The Norwegian Government have been particularly anxious to improve co-operation and Mrs Rokke, the Norwegian Minister of Justice, welcomed the progress so far achieved in discussions with the Home Secretary in September 1982.

Substantial progress has now been made. Close links have been established between Stavanger and Grampian police forces

A major 'table top' exercise to test the plan will be held in Stavanger in March.

In parallel, officials have also been studying legal and political aspects of co-operation, particularly co-operation involving the use of the armed forces or police of one country within the jurisdiction of the other. Much common ground has now been established on the two major issues of primacy of jurisdiction and indemnity of civil claims arising from injury and damage.

The proposals on indemnity do not require legislative backing, but both sides would require general legislation to cover the question of jurisdiction. We have been told that the Norwegians intend to do this in a clause in their Petroleum Bill which will be introduced into the Storting in

/March.



March. This will cover the case of British forces operating on installations in Norwegian waters. We will need to offer a reciprocal agreement. This could be achieved by a clause expanding the 1952 Visiting Forces Act when a suitable legislative opportunity arises. The Home Office will monitor the legislative programme to watch for a suitable opportunity to introduce this amendment. However, it is unlikely that this will occur for two to three years.

In the meantime, we need to reach an understanding with the Norwegians. Officials here, in consultation with the MOD and the Home Office, have, therefore, drawn up the attached confidential Memorandum of Understanding which they would propose to discuss with the Norwegian side at a meeting in Oslo in early March.

I am copying this letter to Richard Mottram (MOD) and Tony Rawsthorne (Home Office).

Yours ever
Robert Bone

(R B Bone)
Private Secretary

A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street

22 FEB 1983

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ANNEX A.

1. With regard to the current terrorist incident at and the understanding of HMG and the Government of the Kingdom of Norway that the armed forces of each country may, with the consent of the other, be used to bring that incident to a resolution, it is further understood that.

A) Each government waives all its claims against the other for damage to its property or for any injury or death suffered by any of its personnel arising out of operations mounted by the armed forces of (the UK) (Norway) (Both Governments) to bring the terrorist incident at to a resolution.

B) The Government of (UK/Norway/Both) will fully indemnify the Government of (UK/Norway/Both) and its personnel against any liability in respect of any act or omission or incident arising out of the operations referred to in paragraph A above and for which the latter are legally responsible to any third party who has suffered loss or damage thereof.

OR

B) Expenses and costs in respect of third party claims arising in relation to the operations referred to in paragraph A above in respect of which either Government or their respective personnel are legally responsible will be shared equally between the Governments who will co-operate and consult with each other for the purpose of dealing with any such claim received.

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