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CONFIDENTIAL

# 10 DOWNING STREET

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FILE TITLE: Relations		SERIES PARAGUAY
		PART: 1
PART BEGINS: 21 May 1997	PART ENDS: 15 April 1999 <del>15 April 1999</del>	CAB ONE:

LABOUR ADMINISTRATION

*Part level*

PREM 49 / 2171

CONFIDENTIAL

PART

CLOSED

DATE CLOSED	7 JUNE 2001
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Series : PARAGUAY

File Title : Relations

Part : 1

Date	From	To	Subject	Class	Secret
21/05/1998	FCO	FA/APS	President-Elect of Paraguay	U	0
24/03/1999	FCO	FA/APS	Assasination of vice President message	C	0
30/03/1999	FCO	FA/APS	Paraguay : Appointment of new President	U	0
15/04/1999	Paraguay/Pres	PM	Letter from new president	U	0

*El Presidente de la República del Paraguay*

Asunción, 15 de abril de 1999.

Nº 11/99


**Señor Primer Ministro:**

*Tengo el honor de dirigirme a Vuestra Excelencia, en ocasión de manifestarle, con relación a su atenta nota sobre los sucesos recientemente ocurridos en mi país, los más profundos sentimientos de gratitud hacia el pueblo y autoridades del Gobierno de Su Majestad Británica, por la solidaridad y comprensión testimoniada hacia mi patria, en los difíciles momentos por los que atravesara recientemente.*

*Es un compromiso de mi Gobierno lograr la absoluta concordia y consolidación democrática, la aplicación irrestricta de la Constitución Nacional y las leyes, como único medio válido para lograr el respeto de los Derechos Humanos, así como el proseguir por el sendero de paz y desarrollo, en estrecha cooperación con las naciones amigas que comparten los ideales que nos alientan.*

*Agradezco a Vuestra Excelencia los votos formulados por el éxito de tan delicada misión, y tenga la certeza Señor Primer Ministro, de que el pueblo paraguayo valora y aprecia, especialmente, la colaboración y el apoyo del Gobierno de Su Majestad Británica en momentos tan trascendentales para la historia democrática del país.*

*Me valgo de la oportunidad para expresar a Vuestra Excelencia las seguridades de mi más alta y distinguida consideración.*



**Luis Angel González Macchi**

*Al Excelentísimo*  
**Sr. TONY BLAIR**  
*Primer Ministro del Gobierno de*  
*Su Majestad Británica*  
*Londres, Gran Bretaña*



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

30 March 1999

*file - told FCO to issue  
PRG  
1/4*

London SW1A 2AH

*Dear Philip*

*TOP-JS  
C: PBdlr  
JB  
Vren*

Paraguay: Appointment of New President

President Raul Cubas Grau of Paraguay resigned on the evening of 28 March. His resignation follows the assassination of vice-president Luis Maria Argaña on 23 March, which had led to widespread political and civil unrest in the capital Asunción. His resignation also came the night before he was likely to be impeached by the Senate for alleged unconstitutional actions. Cubas is now in Brazil, where he is reported to be seeking asylum.

In accordance with the constitution the President of the Senate, Luis Gonzalez Macchi, assumed the office of the Presidency and was sworn in on 28 March. It is not yet clear whether he will see out the remainder of Cubas' term until 2003, or call fresh elections. The new President seems likely to seek advice on this point (on which the Constitution is not clear) from the new government of national unity which he is now putting together.

The Embassy have recommended an early message from the Prime Minister, not so much of congratulation as of sorrow for the violence of recent days and support for the difficult task ahead. I enclose a draft telegram.

...

*Yours ever*

*Andrew Patrick*

(Andrew Patrick)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq OBE  
10 Downing Street

D R A F T

UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO

TO IMMEDIATE ASUNCION

TELNO

OF Z MARCH 99

SUBJECT: PARAGUAY: APPOINTMENT OF NEW PRESIDENT

1. Please convey the following message from the Prime Minister to President Gonzalez Macchi:

Begins

As you assume the office of President of Paraguay I should like to send you my very best wishes and support for the difficult challenges which lie ahead. I was very sorry to hear of the tragic and violent events of recent days, when innocent civilians lost their lives. I hope that, by opting resolutely for the preservation of its democratic institutions, Paraguay will be able to emerge stronger and more prosperous from these difficult times.

I look forward to the continued development of the good relations that exist between our two countries, particularly through increased trade and investment.

Ends

2. There will be no signed original.

COOK

YYVY

MAIN

LACD

PS

PS/MR LLOYD

AMRG

NNNN



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

24 March 1999

London SW1A 2AH

*file - told FCO could issue*

*PRB*

*24/3*

*cc Press*

*Dear Philip*

Paraguay: Assassination of Vice-President

Paraguay's Vice-President Luis Maria Argaña was assassinated on the morning of 23 March in Asunción. According to reports, Argaña's car was forced to stop by another vehicle from which three men (wearing military style clothing) emerged. Argaña was shot with an M-16 rifle and a shotgun. He was accompanied by his driver and one other person, both of whom were seriously injured. If, as is suspected, the assassination is related to the continuing dispute between supporters of Argaña and those of the President, this could pose a threat to democracy in Paraguay.

... The Embassy have recommended an early statement condemning the assassination and expressing sympathy to Argaña's family and to the Paraguayan people. The Embassy recommends, despite the rivalry between Cubas and Argaña, that the Prime Minister send a message to President Cubas, on the lines of the enclosed telegram. FCO News Department can draw from this message in the event of any press enquiries.

*Yours ever*

*Andrew Patrick*

(Andrew Patrick)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq OBE  
10 Downing Street



DRAFT

RESTRICTED

FM FCO

TO IMMEDIATE ASUNCION

TELNO

OF 241530Z MARCH 99

FROM PRIVATE SECRETARY

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF VICE-PRESIDENT ARGANA: MESSAGE OF  
CONDOLENCE

SUMMARY

1. Message of condolence from the Prime Minister.

DETAIL

2. Please convey the following message of condolence from the Prime Minister to President Cubas, following the assassination of Vice-President Argana on 23 March.

Begins

I was shocked and saddened to learn of the assassination of Vice-President Argana. Heinous crimes such as this are unjustified and unacceptable in all circumstances, whatever the motives of the perpetrators.

I should like to extend my deepest sympathy to you, to the family and friends of Dr Argana, and to the people of Paraguay.

Ends

3. There will be no signed original.

COOK

YYYY

MAIN

LACD

PS

PS/LLOYD

NNNN



✓ FA/PS

Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

London SW1A 2AH

file - told FCO to issue

PRB

22/5

21 May 1998

Dear Philip

President-Elect of Paraguay

Dr Raul Cubas Grau of the ruling Partido Colorado (PC) won the Paraguayan Presidential elections on 10 May. Official figures reveal that Cubas won by a comfortable margin (securing some 54% of the votes cast versus 42% for the Opposition candidate). The fact that the elections took place on time, or indeed at all, is a relief in itself. The current President, Juan Carlos Wasmosy was rumoured to have been considering postponing the elections as he was embroiled in a political crisis. But the crisis subsided and elections were conducted freely and fairly. Cubas will now enjoy a legitimacy that current President Wasmosy never had, as his will be the first democratically elected government in Paraguay almost within living memory.

Dr Cubas was previously Executive Director of the Planning Secretariat where he gained a reputation for being determined and true to his word and convictions. He graduated as an electrotechnical engineer from the Catholic University in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

... We recommend that the Prime Minister send a congratulatory message to Dr Cubas. I enclose a draft.

Yours ever

Andrew Patrick

(Andrew Patrick)  
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq  
10 Downing Street

D R A F T

UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO

TO IMMEDIATE ASUNCION

TELNO

OF Z MAY 98

SUBJECT: PARAGUAY: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION: CONGRATULATIONS

1. Please convey the following message from the Prime Minister to President-elect Cubas:

Begins

Please accept my congratulations on your election as the next President of Paraguay. I wish you and your government every success in consolidating the processes of democracy to which you are committed.

I look forward to the continued development of the good relations that exist between our two countries, including through increased trade and investment.

Ends

2. There will be no signed original.

COOK

YYYY

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LAD

PS

PS/MR LLOYD

DIRECTOR AMERICAS

[PALMER LAD 270 2612]

NNNN

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