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Belize: Dispute with Guatemala: Pt 2

PRIME MINISTER'S

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL NO. T10B/83

Text of a Note from Mr George Price,  
Prime Minister of Belize and Minister  
of Foreign Affairs to Commonwealth  
Heads of Government

Talks were held on 24 January at the British Mission in New York between representatives of Belize, Guatemala and the United Kingdom on the long standing controversy affecting our country.

It was our sincere hope that the new administration in Guatemala would have taken a more enlightened and realistic attitude towards the negotiations than did previous Governments in Guatemala.

Instead, the Guatemalan delegation made it clear that the Government of President Rios Montt did not consider the Heads of Agreement signed in March 1981 as the basis for a settlement and proceeded to demand cession of Belizean territory as a price for a settlement.

This demand is for virtually the entire Toledo district in the south from Monkey River down to the Sarstoon River (the long established boundary) including the maritime areas east of this land area which would include the offshore cays of Ranguana and Sapodilla.

The proposal was totally unacceptable and was categorically rejected by the Belize delegation.

Our delegation instead proposed a framework for a settlement based on meeting Guatemala's proposed need for greater access to the high seas, together with joint development along the Sarstoon River on both sides of the border.

The negotiations are now at an impasse and we think it is of vital importance that our friends should understand the present situation; rather than being reasonable and flexible the present Guatemalan position vis-a-vis the Belize question is a blatantly expansionist one. Your continued support at this time for our sovereignty and territorial integrity will be greatly appreciated.

(Signed): George Price, Prime  
Minister of Belize and Minister of  
Foreign Affairs

Belmopan, 7 February 1983