

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS CONFERENCE

GIVEN BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, MR. DOUGLAS HURD,

IN ABUJA

ON TUESDAY, 5 JANUARY 1993

I am concerned about the situation in Sierra Leone and I would like to say a word about that. We are deeply concerned that at least 26 and perhaps many more alleged coup plotters were summarily executed without any process of law of which I know on 29 and 30 December. It looks as if some of those executed may have had no trial at all, that others who appeared before a military tribunal had no right of appeal and that some had been in detention for some time. This is a wholly disproportionate use of violence so I have decided that we will suspend all new aid to Sierra Leone. We will withdraw our existing offer of programme aid which is £4 million sterling in balance of payments support and we will consider what further measures might be taken, for example on the future of existing projects. Those are British decisions. I have begun to discuss the whole situation with our EC partners.