



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

8 December 1987

Dear Charles

Cadmium: Letter from the President of Senegal

Thank you for your letter of 30 November.

Cadmium is a toxic element used in pigments, batteries and plating of other metals. It is also a naturally occurring contaminant of many phosphate rocks. The Commission's draft Action Programme, which was discussed at the Environment Council on 3 December, outlines measures for the control of cadmium, including monitoring emissions and concentrations, restrictions on use, incentives for recycling and assistance to certain ACP countries to reduce levels in their phosphate fertiliser products. The measures are to be based on scientific evaluation of the effects of cadmium on human health and the environment. The Senegalese and Togolese have been lobbying energetically against any controls because they produce phosphate fertilisers with a high cadmium content and export them to EC member states.

Community consideration of this item is still at an early stage, and it is not yet possible to say how much if any weight can be given to the economic effect on phosphate exporting countries in considering what measures the Community may adopt. The text of a draft Resolution on a Community Action Programme was agreed at the Environment Council on 3 December. It will be adopted after all reserves have been lifted (the UK has a House of Lords' scrutiny reserve on the draft). But there is no reason not to give President Diouf the assurance he seeks that decisions will be based firmly on the scientific evidence: that is exactly the approach to which the draft Resolution commits us.

I enclose a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to President Diouf.

I am copying this letter, as you did yours, to Robin Young (DOE).

Yours ever,
L Parker

(L Parker)
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street

DRAFT: minute/letter/teleletter/despatch/note

TYPE: Draft/Final 1+

FROM:

Reference

DEPARTMENT: Prime Minister

TEL. NO:

A67ABO

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

TO:

Your Reference

- Top Secret
- Secret
- Confidential
- Restricted
- Unclassified

His Excellency ^M Mr Abdou Diouf
 President of the Republic of

Copies to:

PRIVACY MARKING

Senegal
SUBJECT:

.....In Confidence

CAVEAT.....

Thank you for your letter of 16 November expressing concern about proposals put forward by the Commission of the European Communities to combat environmental pollution by cadmium.

As you anticipated in your letter, the Council of the European Communities discussed these proposals on 3 December. Our support for these was based on growing evidence of the accumulation of cadmium in the environment and on its known toxicity. Let me reassure you, however, that the need for action to be based on a proper scientific evaluation of the effects of cadmium on the environment and on human health is clearly spelled out in the proposals.

Cn

Enclosures—flag(s).....

RNV. ATTORNEY

ACID RAIN

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