

**April 7, 1983**

**Letter from Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens to  
South African Defense Minister Magnus Malan  
(redacted)**

**Citation:**

"Letter from Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens to South African Defense Minister Magnus Malan (redacted)", April 7, 1983, Wilson Center Digital Archive, South African Defence Forces Archive. Obtained and contributed by Sasha Polakow-Suransky.  
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**Summary:**

In this redacted letter, Israeli Minister of Defense Moshe Arens writes to South African Minister of Defence Magnus Malan with concerns about difficulties with a project and South Africa's concerns about achieving a reciprocal balance of trade between the two countries.

**Credits:**

This document was made possible with support from Carnegie Corporation of New York (CCNY)

**Original Language:**

English

**Contents:**

Original Scan



THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE

Tel-Aviv, April 7, 1983

DEFENCE INTELLIGENCE  
**DECLASSIFIED**

13 JUL 2006

H.E. Minister of Defense  
General Malan  
Republic of South Africa

Dear Mr. Minister,

J.A.L. STEINMANN  
72563596PE WOI

Over many years, both in my capacity as Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee of the Knesset and more recently as Minister of Defense, I followed with gratification the progress and expansion of our [redacted] in ever-increasing areas of mutual interest and concern, in particular in [redacted]

Upon entering my present position, I learned that another project of great promise and significance, [redacted] is approaching final approval of our Governments. I understand, however, that some difficulties have arisen delaying the finalization of the contract for this project due to the request of your [redacted] that it be awarded a pending procurement of [redacted] by Israel's Ministry of Communication.

Let me assure you that I fully recognize the importance of pursuing reciprocal purchases with respect to mutual programs of this nature and that I actively support all efforts undertaken to this end. Accordingly, in furtherance of the efforts already undertaken by the relevant authorities of the Ministry of Defense in support of your [redacted] I made a personal effort to clarify this matter with our Minister of Communication.

The facts, as I have learned, are that the Ministry of Communication has been examining competitive proposals regarding the electronic telephone exchange for a period in excess of three years and, after an extended process of narrowing down the list of potential suppliers, has selected one with whom a hard contract was negotiated. Unfortunately, the possibility of [redacted] became known only about three months ago, and, as a result, [redacted]

*Gen Malan let  
Haimi Goren*

*24/6/83*

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despite all of our efforts and good will, it became apparent that the granting, at that late stage, of a priority status to your [REDACTED] by our Ministry of Communication would have been in violation of the requisite administrative practices legally binding the various Governmental Ministries of the State of Israel.

Under these circumstances, and in view of the importance of the [REDACTED] program, I propose that we proceed to conclude the final negotiations relating to this Project. In parallel, recognizing the justification of your legitimate desire to implement principles of reciprocity, I assure you that I will make every effort to have my Ministry's personnel [REDACTED] to be offered to your [REDACTED] on a priority basis and to enlist the support and assistance of other Ministries in furtherance of this endeavour.

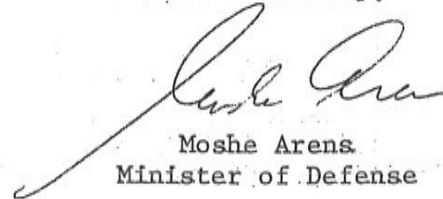
I look forward to the opportunity of meeting with you in the near future in order to discuss our [REDACTED]

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J.A.L. STEINMANN  
72563596PE WO1

Yours sincerely,

  
Moshe Arens  
Minister of Defense