

Argentina Accuses U.K. Of Provocations over Malvinas Islands



Buenos Aires, November 17 (NNN-RHC) -- Argentina has accused the UK of “new provocations” for carrying out military exercises near the disputed Malvinas islands, also known as the Falklands to the British.

"Argentina rejects in the strongest terms these naval and military exercises" conducted some 350 kilometers (217 miles) east of the Latin American country's mainland, the Argentinean Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

It said that the Royal Navy HMS Iron Duke frigate took part in a military exercise, “which included firing 136 shells, in a new provocation by the British government.” The ministry said that the maneuvers were “an attempted demonstration of firepower,” and formed “part of the permanent, illegal military occupation” of the territory. Argentina has filed a complaint with the British embassy in Buenos Aires, the Foreign Ministry added.

The Malvinas Islands are an archipelago in the South Atlantic Ocean. The principal islands are about 300 miles (500 km) east of Argentina's coast. The Malvinas Islands have been declared part of the British

overseas territories since the UK established its colonial rule on the islands in 1833. Argentina and Britain fought a bloody war in April 1982 over the islands and, with the arrival of a British task force and assistance from the United States, fighting ended 45 days later with the complete surrender of Argentinian forces.

The conflict launched by Argentina's military regime claimed nearly 1,000 lives -- some 700 Argentines, 255 British soldiers and sailors and three Falkland Islanders.

Buenos Aires says Britain forcibly stripped Argentina of the islands and has been occupying the territory since then. In June, the UN Decolonization Committee approved a resolution, calling on the U.K. and Argentina to negotiate a solution to the dispute.

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