A CHILEAN transport plane carrying a medical team was on standby at an RAF base last night, apparently ready to take General Pinochet home.

The Ministry of Defence confirmed that the Gulfstream had been given permission to land at RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire. It can stay indefinitely.

The MoD denied that the presence of the aircraft was a sign that the release of the 82 year old General was imminent. The aircraft's arrival was part of "standard arrangements". A spokesman said: "This does not affect the decision on Pinochet one way or another and this is not the business of the British Government anyway."

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