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LETTER DATED 11 JUNE 1971 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

Elections will be held in Papua New Guinea in the period March/April 1972 to elect representatives to the Third Papua New Guinea House of Assembly.

My Government considers it would be valuable for Papua New Guinea, and for future consideration in the United Nations of questions relating to the Territory, if the Trusteeship Council were to decide to send a Visiting Mission to Papua New Guinea for the purpose of observing these elections. I am therefore authorized to extend an invitation through you to the Council to send such a Mission.

If the Trusteeship Council is prepared to agree in principle, my Government suggests that the composition of the Mission be determined in the manner requested by the General Assembly in operative paragraph 5 of resolution 2590 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969: namely, that in deciding to send a Mission to Papua New Guinea for this purpose the Trusteeship Council should decide also to include in the Mission non-members of the Council, who should be chosen on the basis of consultations between the Council, the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and the Administering Authority. There is of course a precedent for this in the procedure adopted for selecting the members of the 1971 Visiting Mission.

My Government envisages that the Mission which it now invites should comprise the traditional number of four members, and it suggests that the precedent established for the 1971 Mission of two members chosen from the Trusteeship Council and two chosen on the basis of consultation with the Special Committee might be followed.

My Government hopes the Mission would be able to remain in Papua New Guinea for a period of two weeks. It suggests that it arrive in the Territory one week

before the closing polling day and remain for one week after that day to observe counting and the declaration of polls.

The itinerary for the Mission would be so arranged as to provide it with a sampling of electoral arrangements, candidate and party activities, polling and counting in a broad cross-section of the Territory as a whole. We would intend that the Mission's itinerary include visits to places in Papua as well as in the Trust Territory of New Guinea.

While the Mission will be most welcome to take the opportunity of its presence in the Territory to see something of political, economic and social development generally, my Government would emphasize that it invites the Council to send a Mission for the specific purpose of observing the House of Assembly elections and it therefore suggests that the Mission's terms of reference might be worded with this in mind.

I note in conclusion that it will be important to ensure that the presence of the Mission in Papua New Guinea during the election does not lend itself to use by contending candidates as an issue to their advantage. I am confident that the Trusteeship Council and the Special Committee are fully cognizant of this need.

My Government would greatly welcome a decision by the Council to accept this invitation and expresses the hope that such a decision can be reached at its current session.
