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Distr.
GENERAL

S/4758/Add.6

7 March 1961

ENGLISH

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH

REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON RECENT
DEVELOPMENTS IN THE LEOPOLDVILLE AREA

Cable dated 7 March 1961 addressed to the President of the Republic of the Congo
by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Congo

1. The Secretary-General has written to you most urgently about the grave events which have occurred at Matadi and Banana and has asked for immediate rectification of the situation.
2. We have been in constant touch with Mr. Delvaux and Mr. Bomboko since the commencement of the occurrences in order to prevent an armed conflict between the UN and ANC troops, resulting in further deterioration of the situation. With a view to bringing about a peaceful settlement of the difficulties which had arisen, the UN Military Command arranged for one of their representatives along with the ANC Chief of Staff to proceed to the area in order to calm down the situation and to bring about a cease-fire.
3. Despite all these efforts, it is most regrettable that an armed conflict took place both at Banana and at Matadi with needless loss of life and bloodshed, and the exacerbation of relations between UN personnel and the ANC in the area.
4. It is evident that the UN Forces which came to the assistance of the Congo in its grave hour of need were neither intended nor equipped to enter into combat with heavily armed units of the Congolese Army. It is therefore regrettable that a situation should have been created where the UN Forces were put in the situation of having to defend against heavy and concerted attack, their positions which they are bound to hold under the Security Council's mandate and which are vital for the maintenance of this entire operation.
5. I need not enter into the details of the conflict or into the manner in which the cease-fire negotiations were conducted from your side. The UN Command had made it plain that to avoid further bloodshed, their representative agreed to the

extreme step of withdrawing temporarily the UN unit from Matadi, a similar withdrawal from Banana having already taken place. As the Secretary-General has made it clear, the UN has custodial responsibilities at the Banana base which it is bound to continue to discharge. Matadi Port is also vital to this operation as it constitutes one of its main lines of communications.

6. The grave events in Matadi and Banana were the culmination point in a series of developments which had the result of creating feelings of fear and tension in the minds of the ANC soldiers against the United Nations. In this connexion, I would refer to the systematic distortions and misinterpretations of the Security Council resolution of 21 February which have been given the widest possible currency over the past fortnight. I need not go into details of the resolution, as the Secretary-General has in his letter dated 21 February to you (S/4752, Annex IV) explained in the clearest possible terms the intentions of the Security Council in adopting its resolution. In spite of this clear explanation, responsible authorities have continued to misinterpret the purpose of the United Nations in the Congo and the implications of the resolution. I need only refer to the radio broadcast which you yourself made on 27 February, to Mr. Adoula's press conference of 2 March, to Mr. Kazadi's radio broadcast calling up reservists, to the first information bulletin issued by the ANC Command Headquarters, to the campaign of vilification and misrepresentation of the United Nations in the Congolese Press, all of which clearly point to the deliberate incitement of the Congolese Army to acts of violence against the United Nations operations in the Congo.

7. The immediate effect of these inflammatory public declarations was to create feelings of fear, suspicion and hatred against the UN operations which found expression in brutal acts of violence against UN personnel following the weekend of 26-27 February 1961. It was only the exemplary restraint in the face of grave provocation shown by the United Nations troops, which prevented the situation in Leopoldville from further deteriorating.

8. In the Lower Congo Region, however, the ANC troops began to show a new aggressiveness towards United Nations personnel in the area, as is evident from the fact that vexations and unjustified restrictions were suddenly introduced in regard to the movement of UN personnel along the roads and at the airports. At the

same time there was unusual activity on the part of heavily armed ANC troops and patrols. The serious incidents at Matadi and Banana were the culmination points in this anti-United Nations campaign.

9. While the United Nations has been engaged in making every possible attempt, by peaceful means including ceaseless negotiations, to obtain rectification of the serious situation, it is regrettable that the recent outbreaks, which I am sure you must regret as much as does the United Nations, have been made the occasion for representing them as a military defeat for the Organization. I may only refer you to the radio broadcast by Mr. Delvaux on 6 March and to his press conference held today, while negotiations between the UN and Congolese authorities have actually been in progress. Such statements can only do harm to the international reputation of the Congo.

10. I need not re-emphasize how vital it is for the United Nations to resume its interrupted responsibilities at the Banana base and its position at Matadi where thirty-one United Nations supply ships are expected to dock in the next three weeks or so. We greatly hope that the United Nations position will be peacefully re-established at these places in the immediate future. We are prepared to discuss in a spirit of mutual understanding the question of procedures and modalities to make this possible, it being understood of course that the posting of national units operating under the UN flag is a matter exclusively within the competence of the United Nations Command. To assist the negotiations, I hope that you will be good enough to issue immediate instructions for the return of the eleven missing United Nations soldiers said to be in the hands of the Congolese troops, for the restitution without delay of the arms and equipment left behind at Matadi, Mr. Delvaux having agreed to this as part of the cease-fire agreement, and for the peaceful restoration of United Nations units to their positions in Banana and Matadi within the shortest possible time. I need hardly emphasize that the world community, as represented by the United Nations, cannot possibly tolerate a situation where it is ejected by force from positions vital to its operations in the Congo, and to allow itself to be strangled as a result of hostile local action.

