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EXCHANGE OF LETTERS DATED 25 AND 26 JULY 1961 BETWEEN THE SECRETARY-  
GENERAL AND THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FRANCE

ADDENDUM

(c) Message dated 27 July 1961 from the Secretary-General addressed to the  
Minister for Foreign Affairs of France

I thank you for your reply to my letter of 25 July. I have also taken note of the statement referred to in your reply.

I think it hardly necessary to embark on an exchange of views by correspondence concerning the points you have raised, since I shall soon be able to discuss matters with your representative to the United Nations personally. I think, however, that a simple clarification is called for.

I have noted with some surprise that what I said in my letter appears to you to set out the views of the Tunisian Government. This remark of yours might be interpreted as meaning that I have acted as the spokesman of one of the parties to the present conflict. I am sure, however, that such is not your intention, and it must have been apparent to you that my attitude, as presented in my letter, is based solely on the interpretation of the duties of the Secretary-General and of the principles of the Charter adopted by the Organization in the past, and also on the intentions, I venture to believe, of all the members of the Council who voted for the interim resolution of 22 July 1961.

You refer in your letter to only one part of that resolution. However, without in any way usurping the right to interpret the resolution - a right which belongs to the Council alone - I must point out that the cease-fire and the withdrawal of armed forces were linked together by the Council as two integrated phases of a peace-making operation. In the light of United Nations practice, the request must be regarded as being addressed to each of the two parties to the conflict, separately. I also note that, since no conditions were attached by the

Council, the normal interpretation is that the implementation of the measures requested cannot be regarded as conditional on any acts which the other party might perform outside the scope of the resolution. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Council, here as with other decisions of a similar nature, acts on the assumption that the reciprocity of the measures adopted by the parties will be ensured by the respect of all the parties concerned for the Council's decision.

You will have noted that in my reply to President Bourguiba's invitation I observed that the basic problem which the Council has decided to continue debating is in my view outside my personal competence - which in no way affects the fact that it is my duty, as usual, to do everything possible to further the implementation of the decision already taken, as set forth in paragraph 1 of the resolution. It was with that end in view that I thought it useful to make contact with you to see whether, on the basis of clarification of the attitudes of both parties, it might not be possible to overcome the difficulties which have been encountered hitherto in attempts to establish the contact desirable for an exchange of views on the withdrawal of armed forces.

I regret that this initiative on my part has not yielded any result. If the establishment of contact continues to prove impossible, it seems clear to me that the execution of the Council's request must not be further delayed by the difficulty of achieving co-ordination, by agreement between both parties, of the measures indicated.

Since it rests with the Council to interpret its decisions, the right to do so not being delegated to any organ, and since it also rests with the Council to take the necessary decisions with a view to their implementation, I shall limit myself to this brief explanation of the way in which I have had to interpret my duties under the Charter in the present case.

I have the honour to be, etc.

(Signed) Dag Hammarskjöld

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