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LETTER DATED 24 AUGUST 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF SRI LANKA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a letter dated
24 August 1990 from the Honourable James Edward Harold Herat, Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Sri Lanka, addressed to you regarding resolution 661 (1990) adopted by
the Security Council on 6 August 1990.

(Signed) Daya PERERA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
Sri Lanka to the United Nations

Annex

Letter dated 24 August 1990 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Sri Lanka addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to your letter of 8 August 1990 concerning the implementation of Security Council resolution 661 (1990).

Sri Lanka is acutely concerned with the escalating situation in the Gulf region. The Government deeply regrets that the dispute between Iraq and Kuwait could not be settled through peaceful means and that this has resulted in the current state of high tension which has wide ranging ramifications extending throughout the world. Sri Lanka has always stood for the settlement of disputes through peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.

Sri Lanka supports United Nations action for the resolution of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The United Nations Charter affirms, in essence, the sovereign equality of all States and enjoins States to refrain in their international relations, from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

The Government of Sri Lanka has taken note of Security Council resolution 661 (1990) which is mandatory. The Government of Sri Lanka is also conscious of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and will take all possible steps to comply with the provisions of the resolution.

The implementation of Security Council resolution 661 (1990) entails, inter alia, major economic hardships for Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka has significant trade in food and other items with Iraq and Kuwait. A large number of Sri Lankan nationals are employed in the Gulf region, including about 100,000 in Kuwait, many of whom have now been constrained to return to Sri Lanka. The remittances of such nationals have been a major source of foreign exchange for Sri Lanka. In human terms, the social and economic consequences of the large-scale return of such a labour force would be considerable. Additionally, the escalating prices of fuel etc. will further erode the financial viability and the economic stability of the country.

Moreover, Sri Lanka continues to be confronted with an unprecedented threat to the peace and security of its people and to the State's territorial integrity from a secessionist group which has indulged in acts of terrorism and violence, rejecting available options for peaceful negotiations promoted by the Government of Sri Lanka and accepted by all sections of its population. Resources meant for poverty alleviation and other national development efforts are being diverted to deal with this threat.

The mounting cost of dealing with this threat combined with the cumulative adverse impact arising out of the developments in the Gulf region impose acute hardship on Sri Lanka's economy and severely weakens its ability to take countermeasures to combat terrorism and safeguard its territorial integrity.

Further, any political, economic and social instability resulting from these adverse developments would lead to grave threats to the democratic way of life and governance.

In accordance with Article 50 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Sri Lankan Government would in due course consult the Security Council in regard to the special economic and human problems arising from the carrying out of measures in compliance with Security Council resolution 661 (1990).

It will be appreciated if Your Excellency's report on the implementation of Security Council resolution 661 (1990) would reflect the concerns expressed by Sri Lanka and its intention to request consultations with the Security Council.

(Signed) James Edward Harold HERAT
Minister of Foreign Affairs

