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Agenda item 85

THE SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Letter dated 7 December 1960 from the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia  
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request that the Memorandum of the Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, which I delivered to you today, be distributed as a United Nations document.

(Signed) Dobrivoje VIDIC  
Permanent Representative  
of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia  
to the United Nations

MEMORANDUM

With regard to the extremely grave and dangerous situation in the Republic of the Congo, which is increasingly assuming the character of a civil war and threatening not only the vital interests of the people of the Congo, but also peace in Africa and in the world in general, the Government of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia deems it necessary to communicate to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the following:

1. The Yugoslav Government and the peoples of Yugoslavia have followed, from the very beginning of the crisis in the Congo, with deep interest and the greatest concern the developments in that country, which have become ever more serious and dangerous owing, primarily, to continuous intervention and interference from without, with a view to jeopardizing the independence and the free development of the newly established Congolese State. Because of such developments, the Yugoslav Government requested, inter alia, on 8 September of this year, an urgent convening of the Security Council for the purpose of examining the situation prevailing at that time, and of undertaking appropriate measures likely to give to the course of events a positive turn, in the interests of the people of the Congo and of peace in the world. Yugoslav representatives participated actively in the work of the Security Council, of the fourth emergency session of the General Assembly and in the consideration of the questions pertaining to the situation in the Congo at the present fifteenth regular session of the General Assembly, lending their support to the efforts to promote the most effective activity of the United Nations in the Congo, in harmony with the clear provisions of the three resolutions of the Security Council and of the resolution of the fourth emergency session of the General Assembly.

The Yugoslav Government, for its part, exerted whole-hearted efforts for the realization of these aims, and placed at the disposal of the United Nations Force in the Congo its pilots, technicians and other personnel, in accordance with the requests of the United Nations. The Yugoslav Government expected that the decisions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly of the United Nations would be implemented consistently and in their true spirit.

However, the most recent developments, as well as the objective information relating to them, show and confirm that the above-mentioned decisions have not been implemented, and that we have been witnessing an adverse development causing extreme concern. The Yugoslav Government considers that the role and activity of the organs and troops of the United Nations in the Congo have come into sharp contradiction with the aims and terms of reference given to them under the aforementioned resolutions.

2. The task of the United Nations Force, from the outset, has been to prevent foreign intervention by ensuring the speediest and complete withdrawal of its direct protagonists and by assisting the legal Central Government of the Congo to defend law and order and to safeguard and consolidate the independence, unity and territorial integrity of the country. After so many months, not one of these tasks has been carried out. Foreign intervention in the Congo continues. Power has openly been usurped by persons and groups in the service of foreign intervention. The work of the legally elected Central Government of the Republic of the Congo and of its Parliament has been rendered impossible. Personal and political freedoms have arbitrarily been taken away. The usurpatory regime of Mobutu has arrested and publicly subjected to the most brutal ill-treatment and endangered the very life of the Prime Minister and of a number of members of the Central Government of the Congo, of leading personalities of the Senate, of numerous members of Parliament, and of other outstanding figures in Congolese political life.

All this has been and continues to be done along with the evident feverish activity of interventionist forces and use of their arms, transport and other materiel, and all that in the presence of the representatives and of the armed forces of the United Nations who, so far, have not prevented such developments, nor ensured the implementation of the decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

3. In this connexion, many warnings and criticisms were addressed, in the Security Council and in the General Assembly, by the representatives of a number of Member States, including the representative of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, and particularly the countries of the African region, to the responsible functionaries and organs of the United Nations, whereby

attention was primarily drawn to the fact that the decisions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly were not being implemented, and that the instigators of the crisis in the Congo, of the type of Mobutu, Tshombé and Kalondji, were thereby encouraged and assisted, which was bound to lead to a compromising of the role of the United Nations Force and of other bodies of the United Nations in the Congo.

In spite of this, an ever growing number of grave mistakes continued to be made whereby, through ruthless violence and in the presence and under the protection of the troops and organs of the United Nations in the Congo, the constitutional and political situation in the country has been completely altered. In this respect, a special role was played by the armed groups under the leadership of Mobutu, who continues to organize a completely unconstitutional and usurpatory regime. At the same time with the infringement of the democratic rights and freedoms of the Congolese people, it subjects to attacks and expels the diplomatic missions of those countries which have, without any reservation, responded to the appeal of the United Nations and sent their units to protect the independence, integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of the Congo. It attacks, in a provocative manner, and with arms, the units of the United Nations Force, the personnel and property of the United Nations, and now, according to all appearances, is preparing to undertake the physical liquidation of the recognized political and national leaders of the Congo.

4. This whole impermissible activity is being carried out with the unexplainably tolerant attitude of the Command of the United Nations Force and other United Nations organs in the Congo, apparently based on a distortion of the mandate of the Force and of United Nations representatives, which has found expression in the policy of so-called "non-interference" in the internal affairs of the Congo. An extremely grave situation has thereby been created, where the activity of those forces which, through their intervention from without and through the most active impeding of the constitutional life of the country and functioning of the Central Government and Parliament of the Congo, is developing without any hindrance.

There have even been cases where the units of the United Nations Force in the Congo have taken part, by order of the Command, in the armed suppression of the people's revolt against foreign intervention, where they have arrested

and turned over to the "organs of security" in the service of foreigners, people who were hostile to them, and so on.

5. For all these reasons, the Yugoslav Government considers that the prestige and authority of the United Nations have suffered the greatest blow so far in the Congo and that the continuation of the aforementioned illegal activity could lead to even graver consequences both for peace in that part of the world and in general, and for the United Nations itself and its role in international life.

6. The Yugoslav Government declares that the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, as a Member of the United Nations, does not wish to bear or share, in any way, the responsibility for what is taking place at present in the Congo, in the presence of the United Nations Force and of other United Nations organs. It has therefore decided to withdraw forthwith its diplomatic mission from Leopoldville. It has also decided to recall its pilots and all other personnel now in the Congo at the request of the United Nations. It reserves the right to request from the United Nations material compensation for the expenditure incurred as a result of the activity of the above personnel.

7. The Yugoslav Government continues to believe that there can be no solution of the crisis in the Congo without reliance on the genuine national forces in that country and without the speediest and complete withdrawal of all Belgians who hold posts in various military detachments, in the administrative apparatus, as well as economic and other institutions in the Congo.

8. As the first and most essential task of the United Nations and as a prerequisite for any further normalization of conditions in the Congo, the Yugoslav Government demands that the most urgent and the most energetic steps be taken for the liberation of the Head of the Central Government of the Congo, Mr. Patrice Lumumba, as well as other arrested personalities from the ranks of the members of the Government, Parliament and public and political life of the Congo.

9. The Yugoslav Government considers that the last moment has come to implement the existing decisions of the Security Council and the General Assembly on the Congo, and to direct, in this connexion, the activities of the responsible United Nations organs in a positive direction, so as to restore constitutional

order in the country, fully liquidate foreign intervention, establish law and order without delay and preserve the independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Congo.

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