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LETTER DATED 6 JUNE 1980 FROM THE DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF IRAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of a message addressed to  
Your Excellency from H.E. Mr. Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, Minister for Foreign Affairs of  
the Islamic Republic of Iran.

It would be appreciated if the message could be circulated as a document of  
the Security Council.

(Signed) Jamal SHEMIRANI  
Deputy Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 26 May 1980 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of Iran addressed to the Secretary-General

Referring to the letter of Mr. Sadoon Hammadi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, dated 2 April which has been published as a document of the Security Council (S/13918), I would like to make the following points:

Since the Islamic Republic was established in Iran, the Iraqi Government has adopted a hostile attitude toward the new régime. It has, indeed, embarked upon an incessant policy of agitation and subversion against Iran.

The letter submitted by the Iraqi Foreign Minister is yet another attempt that could only be construed in that vein. It is motivated solely by political considerations as it shows a complete lack of comprehension on the part of its author regarding the historical background of the Islands. It took Iraq almost eight years to break the silence and to raise this question anew. The timing alone is indicative of the real intentions of the Iraqi Government. The Iraqi régime, in our view, follows the path of Israel and as such it is in no position to espouse the views of the Persian Gulf States.

This is no place to embark upon a detailed perusal of the legitimacy of the Iranian position, suffice it to say that the three Islands of Abu Mussa, Greater Tumb and Lesser Tumb have been throughout history an integral part of Iran. A veritable library could be compiled of official documents and maps that attest to Iran's sovereignty over these Islands.

When Britain withdrew its forces from the Persian Gulf in 1971, Iran reasserted its sovereignty over the Islands. Thus what has been described by the Foreign Minister of Iraq as "illegitimate occupation" is nothing but reassertion of Iran's sovereignty over part of its territories.

Iran has always viewed the question of the Islands not an issue between Iran and the Arabs, but an issue between Iran and British colonialism. The natural sequence to the withdrawal of the British forces from the Persian Gulf was reassertion of Iran's sovereignty over the Islands and the formal disposition of this question. The Iraqis' contention, therefore, as I stated earlier, is nothing but another effort at turning a non-issue into a divisive element, and at a time when the region is in great need of genuine co-operation.

While the Islamic Republic of Iran remains steadfast in defence of its territories, I would like to stress here that the foreign policy of Iran is anchored on the principle of respect for the independence and territorial integrity of every member of the international community. For us this principle has special meaning and imparts greater significance when it is viewed in the context of our relations with fellow Moslem States.

(Signed) Sadegh GHOTBZADEH  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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