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LETTER DATED 8 MARCH 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 8 March 1993 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 8 March 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

I should like to inform you of a serious matter that recently came to light when, in its issue of 2 March 1993, a copy of which I am transmitting to you, the British publication Mideast Mirror reported that a unit of the Israeli Army had intended to assassinate President Saddam Hussein and that for two years the Israeli army command had been gathering information on the movements of President Saddam Hussein, with United States assistance, by means of reconnaissance aircraft and satellites.

Mideast Mirror states that on 5 November last an electronically guided bodyheat-seeking missile equipped with sensitive tracking devices exploded at a training site at the Tze'elim base in the Negev desert killing five members of a special training unit of the Israeli army that was conducting drills in southern Israel with a view to assassinating President Saddam Hussein.

Mideast Mirror indicates that Major-General Amiram Levine, commander of the Israeli team charged with carrying out the assassination, had intended to lead a personal attack inside Iraq relying on the information gathered by the Israeli army command on the movements of President Saddam Hussein, with United States assistance, by means of satellites and reconnaissance aircraft.

The world information media have carried this information, which arouses strong indignation and anger by exposing the existence of criminal policies, acts and intentions that are incompatible with all international and moral principles, norms and laws.

The Government of the United States of America has been sending a U-2 spy-plane to fly about in Iraqi airspace since 12 August 1991. Not one week has elapsed since that time in which the United States spy-plane in question did not commit three or four violations of Iraq's airspace on the pretext of performing reconnaissance functions for the United Nations Special Commission. Furthermore, the United States U-2 spy-plane violates Iraqi airspace from a base in Saudi Arabia.

Iraq has protested in the strongest terms against these acts of espionage and has condemned them in the letters addressed to you by its Minister for Foreign Affairs. As of 3 March 1993, there had been 59 such letters referring to 118 violations of Iraq's airspace by the United States spy-plane in question.

In all of these letters, we have stated that the United States U-2 spy-plane is being used for purposes other than those established by the Security Council and that its activities are prejudicial to the sovereignty and security of Iraq.

We are providing you today with further proof of what we have told you in the past. The information published by Mideast Mirror has been reported by much of the world's press and information media, including the Israeli

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newspaper Ha'aretz in its edition of 4 March 1993, British newspapers such as The Sunday Times and the American television network CNN, and all of them confirm that the despicable Israeli scheme to assassinate President Saddam Hussein relied on United States assistance provided by means of reconnaissance aircraft and satellites.

We reiterate our official request for a halt to the use of the United States U-2 spy-plane by the Special Commission, because this aircraft is in fact being used for purposes other than those established by the Security Council and because its activities pose a threat to Iraq's sovereignty and security. It should be recalled that Iraq has on a number of occasions proposed alternatives that would meet the wishes of the Special Commission without impinging on Iraq's sovereignty and security.

I request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said Al-SAHAF  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Iraq

The sources had no explanation of what exactly went wrong to cause the accident at Tze'ellin in what was intended as the "final rehearsal" for the attempt to kill the Iraqi leader. But they said "most of the 11 members of the unit who were killed or injured by the missile were posing as Saddam and his immediate entourage" during the exercise.

The sources were not sure whether Israel, Iraq's main Scud target during the 1991 Gulf war, would have claimed responsibility if the operation had not been aborted at its penultimate stage.

They noted that "the purpose of the IDF exercise at Tze'ellin was not ordinary. It was not to rehearse the assassination of Hizbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah on the outskirts of Beirut. This version was deliberately leaked to the foreign press as part of a disinformation campaign to cover up the real target — Saddam.

"Eight months before the Tze'ellin accident, Israel broke with precedent and took responsibility for the killing of Nasrallah's predecessor Sheikh Abbas Musawi in a helicopter ambush which did not require either an elite force

or special training."

They said "because there was more to the accident at Tze'ellin than meets the inexperienced eye, heavy censorship was used to prevent all the details being divulged in public."

The sources added that only a "very sensitive and sophisticated mission to assassinate Saddam Hussein could have attracted so many top brass to the ill-fated drill, including Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Ehud Barak, Deputy Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Amnon Shabak, Chief of Military Intelligence Maj.-Gen. Uri Saron, and the commander of the operation, Maj.-Gen. Levine."

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