



Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/25761
12 May 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 11 MAY 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 herewith a letter dated May 1993 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, addressed to you concerning the meetings of the Sanctions Committee held on 5 and 6 April 1993.

I should be grateful if you would have my letter and the annexed letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 11 May 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letters, the most recent being that dated 13 February 1993, I have the honour to draw your attention to the practices observed in the name of the Committee established by Security Council resolution 661 (1990), known as the Sanctions Committee, and the unjust and unjustifiable positions imposed on the Committee by the representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and France involving biased and unlawful interpretations of Security Council resolutions and demonstrating the extent of the arbitrariness and injustice that has befallen the Iraqi people as a result of its being deprived of its essential humanitarian needs.

The decisions of the Sanctions Committee at its most recent meetings, held on 5 and 6 April 1993, constitute another example of the injustice and prejudice afflicting the Iraqi people. In a swift review of the requests that the Committee rejected at these meetings, we find the following:

1. Objection by the United States to 33 requests;
2. Objection by the United Kingdom to 25 requests;
3. Objection by Japan to 10 requests;
4. Objection by France to 4 requests.

These unjust positions are dangerous precedents that sully the reputation of the United Nations because they are precedents that conflict with the norms of international law, the United Nations Charter and fundamental human rights. The unjustified objections that emanated from the Committee at its recent meetings, of which I cite some examples below, are clear evidence of the practices to which I have referred:

1. The Committee rejected a number of requests for the supply of textiles to Iraq, including thread for weaving children's clothes, on the pretext that these items are an input for industry. What these arbitrary-minded representatives wanted to say was that Iraq is prohibited from having a textile industry.
2. The Committee rejected a request from the company CIS Paris to supply Iraq with 1,200 kilograms of nylon cloth for filtering flour for the General Company for Grain Processing. The cloth in question is an end-product used in the filters attached to grain mills to rid the flour of adulterants, stones and other foreign matter so as to make it acceptable for baking bread. On this basis, this commodity is a humanitarian staple inasmuch as it enters into the making of bread, the essential food need of all peoples, as the Sanctions Committee would presumably agree.
3. The Committee rejected a number of requests for supplying Iraq with glue to be used in the preparation of textbooks, of which the Ministry of Education alone requires 50 million a year, and notebooks, which are needed by pupils at

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all educational levels. In addition, children at the primary levels need this glue for handicraft lessons and technical education. Thus, the argument fabricated by some Committee members that it is an input for industry is not true.

4. The Committee refused to allow the supply to Iraq of 120 tons of rock wool felt, on the grounds that it was an input for industry, whereas rock wool is an end-product used in thermal insulation and having no relation to industry.

5. The Committee refused to allow the supply to Iraq of blank audio cassettes, because they are an input for industry, whereas everyone knows that blank audio cassettes are end-products having no relation to industry.

The above-mentioned items, as well as the other items requests for which were rejected by the Committee at its most recent meetings, out of a total of more than 71 requests, are a humanitarian need for all peoples of the world, and it is unimaginable that the provisions of the United Nations Charter, in spirit or in letter, could prohibit the supply of such items to any country. Nor can we comprehend these objections except as premeditated political moves aimed at depriving the people of Iraq of the most elementary human requirements. Consequently, the work of the above-mentioned Committee has become remote even from the purposes for which it was established, and the continuation of its work according to the current method actually damages the reputation of the international Organization and calls in question its credibility.

I request you to exercise your good offices and intervene to put a halt to these practices, which conflict with all humanitarian considerations. I request you to have this letter circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq
11 May 1993
